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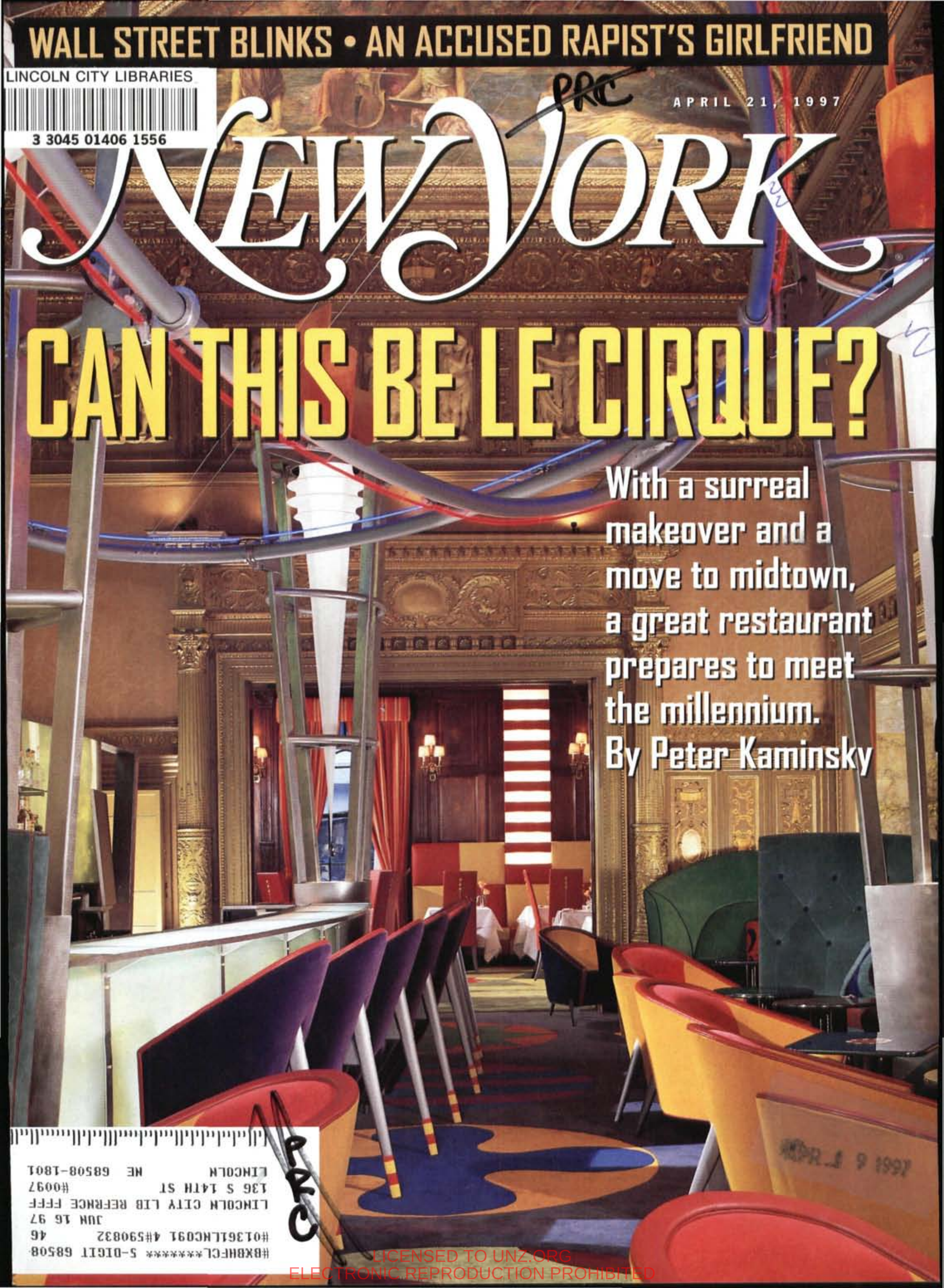

CAN THIS BE LE CIRQUE?

With a surreal makeover and a move to midtown, a great restaurant prepares to meet the millennium.

By Peter Kaminsky

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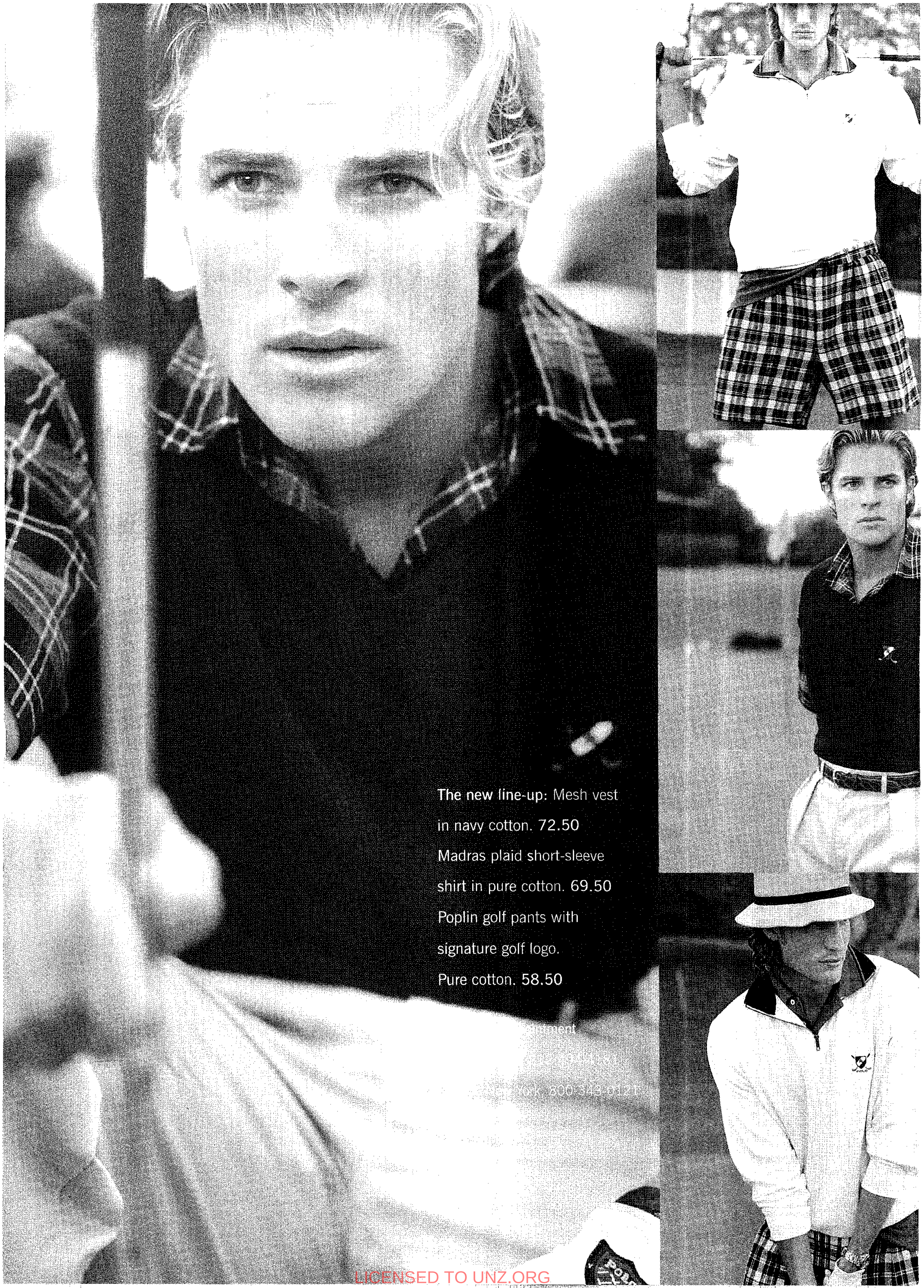

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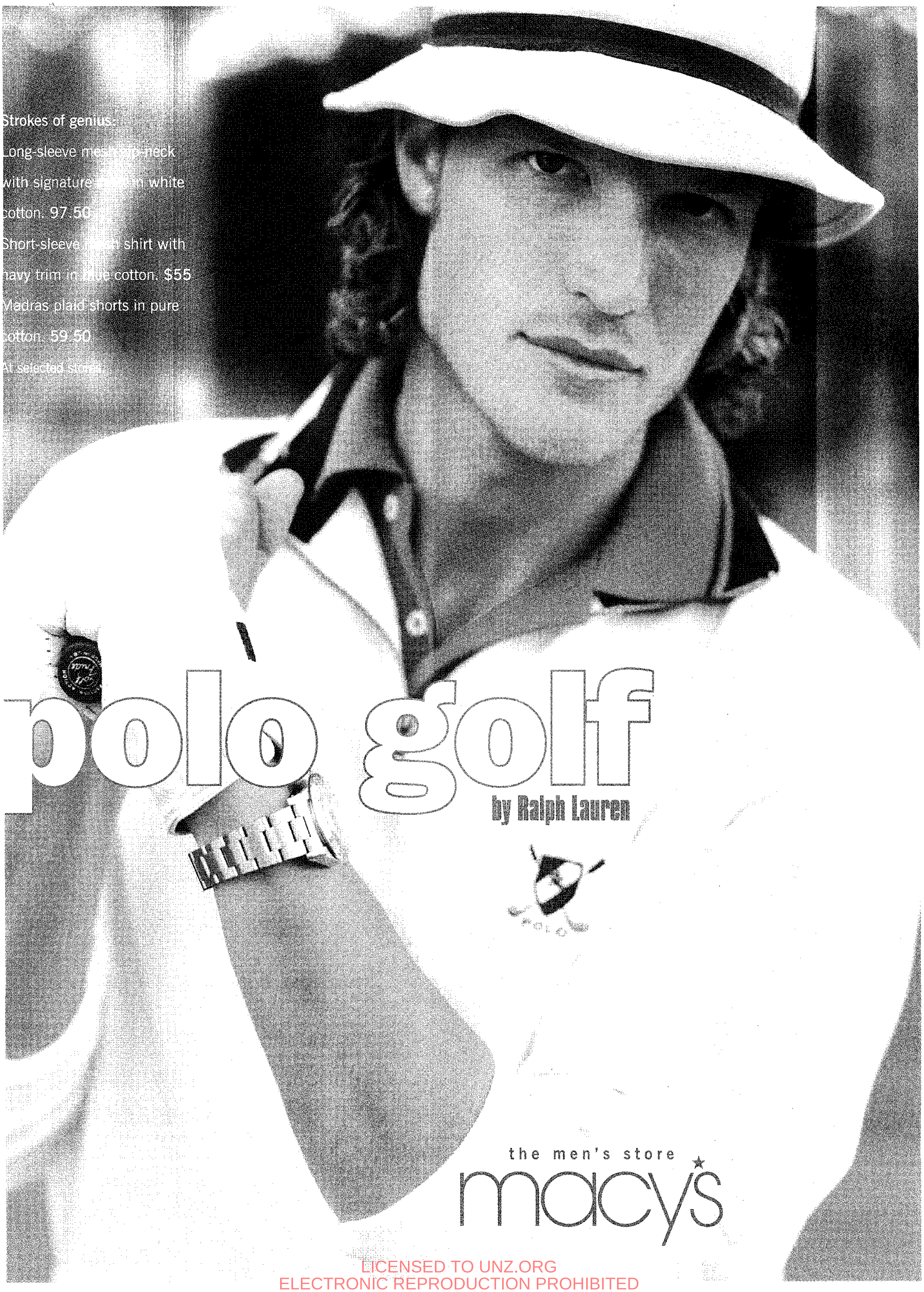
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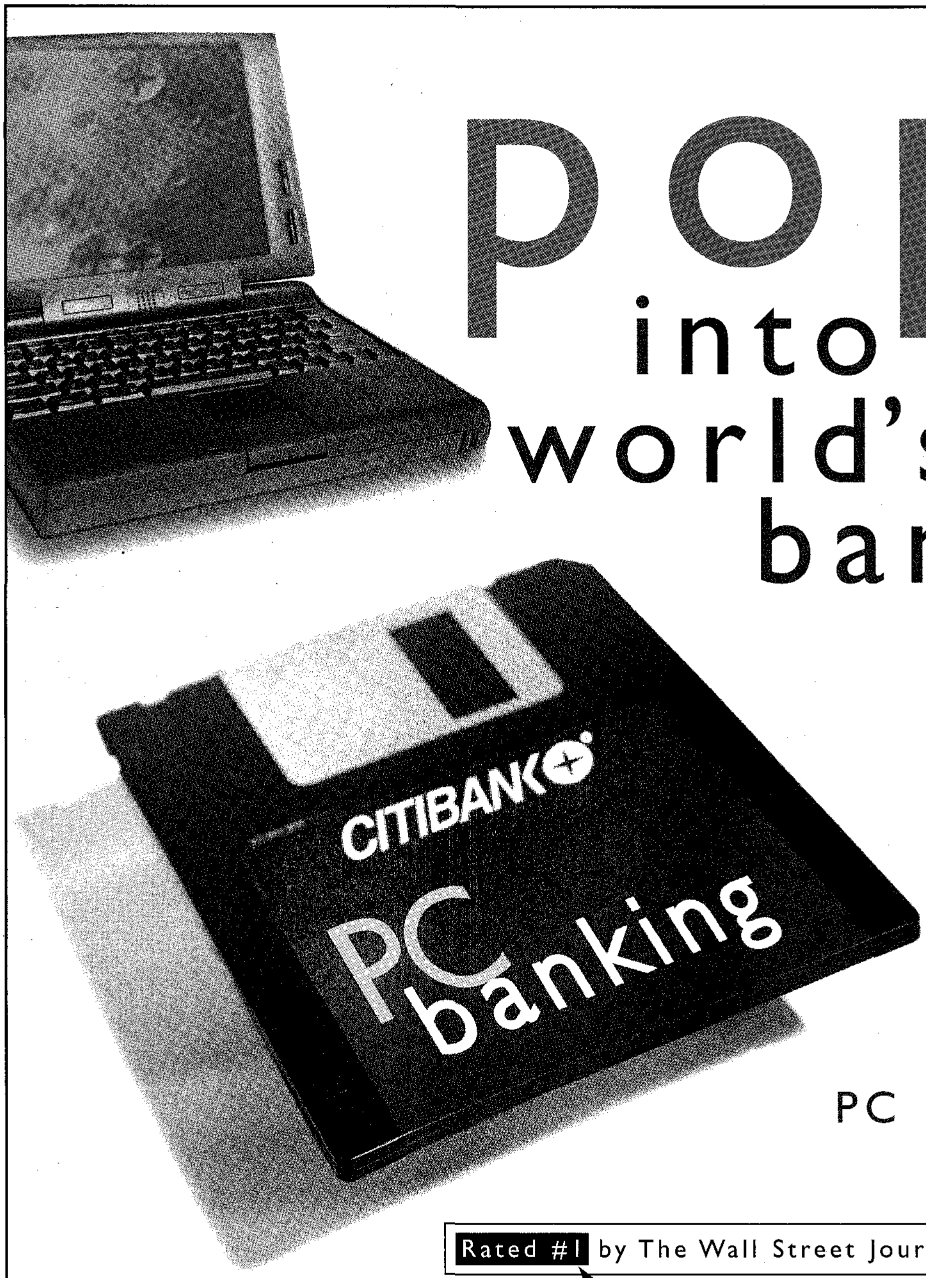

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> *of an eighteenth-century palazzo."*
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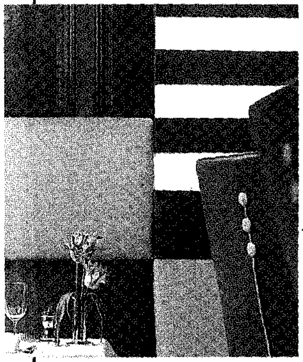

24 Cirque Maximus

By Peter Kaminsky

With the ladies who lunch not lunching as often, Le Cirque owner Sirio Maccioni saw that change was inevitable. And change Le Cirque he has. This week, the Tihany-designed, riotously furnished Le Cirque 2000 opens in the Villard Houses on Madison Avenue. A behind-the-scenes account of the remaking of the greatest food show on earth.

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By John Guare

When Stockard Channing got in touch with her Southern roots, she kept thinking *Little Foxes.* This week, she returns to the Beaumont as Lillian Hellman's villainous matriarch, Regina Giddens—the role originated on Broadway by Tallulah Bankhead. We sent her pal John Guare to find out why.

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Amy Molitor and Alex Kelly were an archetypal Darien High School couple—cute, popular, well-off. Ten years later, they still are, except that Alex is on trial for two rapes alleged to have taken place in Amy's car. Is there a limit to standing by your man?

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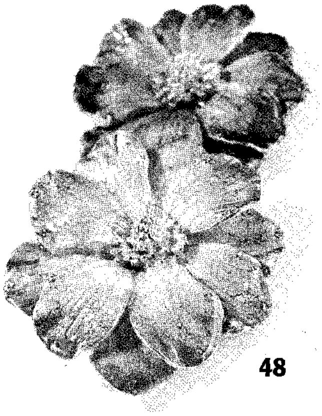

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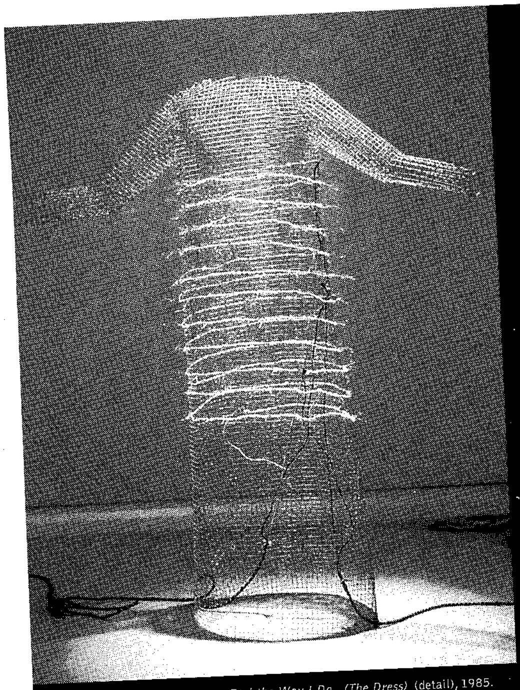

Jana Sterbak, *I Want You to Feel the Way I Do...(The Dress)* (detail), 1985.
Metal structure, incandescent filament, and projected text.
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Photograph: Paul Orenstein

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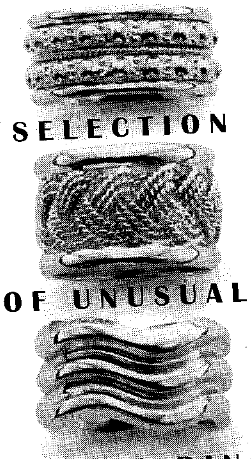

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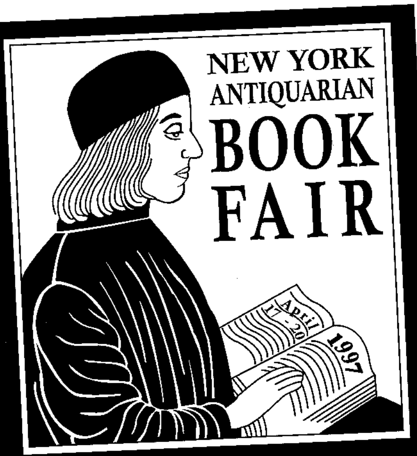

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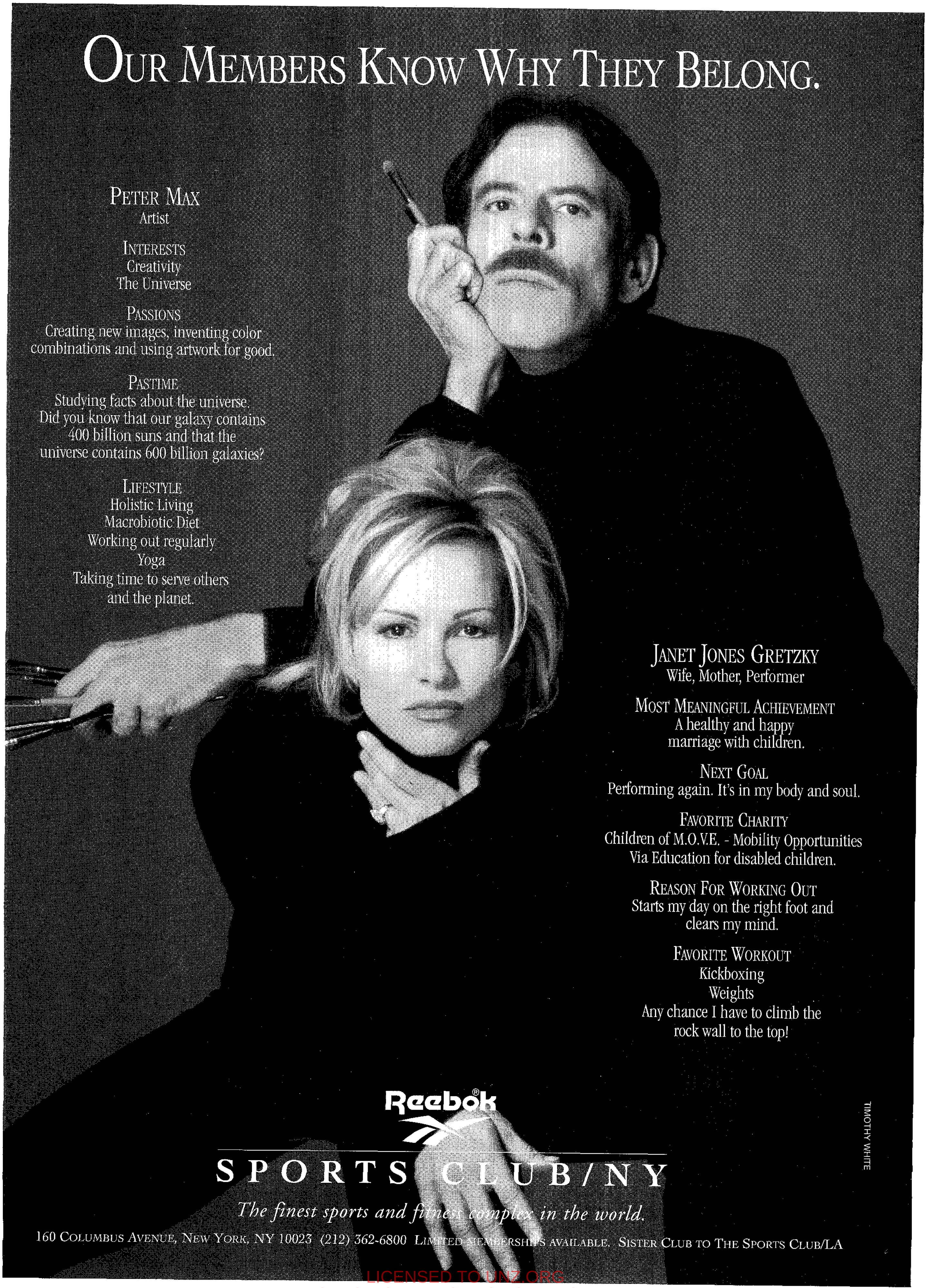

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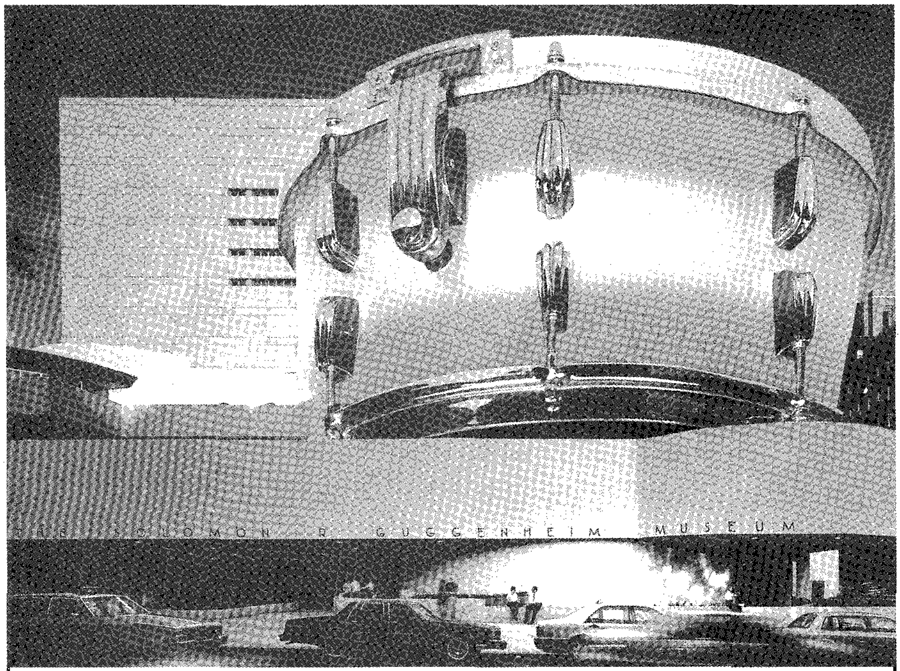

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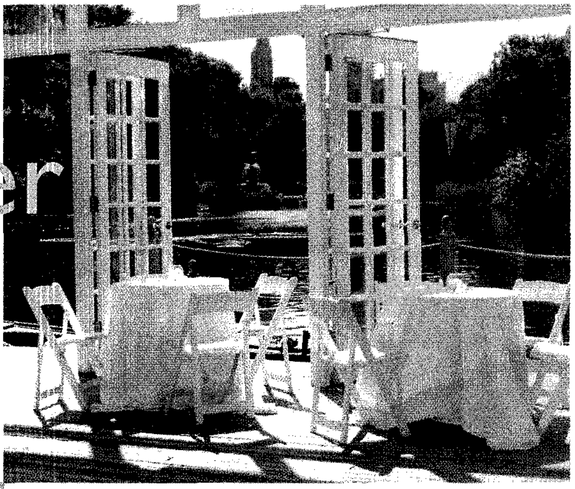

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I AM PLEASED THAT *NEW YORK* HAS brought us all up to date on the architectural consequences of Staten Island borough president Guy Molinari's appalling obstructionism over the Whitehall Ferry Terminal in lower Manhattan ["Cityscape: The Ferry Godfather," by Karrie Jacobs, March 31]. But where were you last summer? Attention and a little informed support at that time might have tipped the scales in favor of the tough, beautiful, and courageous second scheme. Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates and Anderson/Schwartz Architects labored under the burden of a sustained political assault to give New York City their best work.

Now architect Fred Schwartz seems fated to suffer through years of cheap shots by the press and the architectural profession. I hope he survives the ordeal.

Mark Wright, A.I.A.
BROOKLYN

I WINCED WHEN I READ KARRIE JACOBS'S ATtack on Frederic Schwartz. When Jacobs praises the "outlandish but wonderful" original design, she calls it the work of "a famously controversial architect, Robert Venturi." She looked at Schwartz, the architect of the revised design, and saw "a slight man with the demeanor of a civil servant." Those who know Schwartz see a Prix de Rome winner, an architect with a strong reputation for his design talent, a Venturi protégé, and, as Jacobs didn't mention until the end of her piece, the co-winner and co-designer with Venturi, Scott Brown of the original ferry-terminal-competition design with its much-lamented, oversized clock.

Joan Kron
MANHATTAN

AS A RESIDENT OF STATEN ISLAND, CONgresswoman Susan Molinari's district, I am disgusted with the complete lack of political assistance—local, city, state, and federal—for the communities in this "bastard" borough. Molinari's willingness to fight for federal money to aid Donald Trump's Riverside South project is further proof that the taxpaying residents of her district are the least of her concerns ["Cityside: Railroaded," by Hugo Lindgren, March 17].

I have been restoring a century-old fourteen-room house that has sweeping vistas of New York City and lower New York Bay. The St. George–New Brighton neighborhood is the largest residential landmarked community in New York City. Yet we are living in the shadows of the largest vacant building compound on Staten Island; the 300-plus apartment unit was held by the FDIC and recently sold to developers. Many residents pleaded with Congresswoman Molinari to assist us in this ongoing nightmare, and to date have received no help, and in many cases not even a response.

L. Bolesta
STATEN ISLAND

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Blue Bloods

OH, GOD. WHAT A TIMID, TERRIFIED, PAthetic bunch of losers Melinda Blau describes in "The Doubles Standard" [April 7]. The final quote of the story is perfect: " '. . . those downtown clubs, like System and Chaos, are crowded with a whole bunch of weird people. At Doubles, we can dance and we don't have to worry about security.' " Security? This quote is from a 29-year-old man. A venture capitalist, no less, someone who is supposed to be comfortable with risk. And he's apparently afraid to go dancing without a team of bodyguards.

The constant references to "breeding," to "people like us," to "certain circles," and to "one of us" pretty much give the game away. The members of this club are simply terrified of anyone different from themselves, anyone who would challenge their position in a world that has left them very far behind.

Lawrence M. McKenna
MANHATTAN

Stone Diaries

WHEN LINDA HALL'S GREAT PIECE "ROmancing Robert Stone" appeared, I was in the middle of reading Thoreau's *Walden*, and I became amazed at the similarities between the writers [March 31]. Stone said: "I socialize with almost no one, and Main Street is Rodeo Drive, but the herons are still here in the summer, and the ducks are still here in the fall." Now Thoreau, boasting about his surroundings at Walden, writes: "squirrels on the roof and under the floor, a whippoorwill on the ridge pole, a blue jay screaming beneath a window, a hare or woodchuck under the house, a screech-owl or cat-owl behind it, a flock of wild geese or a laughing loon on the pond, and a fox to bark at night."

Both writers also share a love of out-of-the-ordinary experiences. Hall and Stone on Stone: "He visited the brothels, skid row, the B-girl dorms, the transvestites who scared the last census taker away." Stone regarded this experience as "an aspiring young novelist's dream." Now Thoreau, when commenting on those who went to see him at Walden: "The old and infirm and the timid, of whatever age or sex, thought most of sickness, and sudden accident and death; to them life seemed full of danger—what danger is there if you don't think of any?"

It would be nice for Stone to write that long-awaited autobiography from Walden. He may see a bit of himself.

Dr. Manny Losada
MIAMI, FLA.

Get Pumped

AS A GEEZER WHO BEGAN PUMPING IRON back in the forties, I was interested to see in Barbara Lippert's "Pecsploitation" how times change ["The Image," March 31]. Back then, having visible muscles was not very respectable—a white-trash, vaguely disgusting, we-suspect-you're-queer activity. People would ask, "What do you want those muscles for?"

Jesse Bryant
MANHATTAN

Corrections In last week's issue, Rene Chun should have been included in the list of "Best of New York" contributors. In addition, in "The Best of Bread," the subject of the photograph is baker's assistant Roger LeMignon, not Jim Lahey. In the April 7 issue, in "The Scene," Manuel E. Gonzalez was misidentified as Amory Houghton III.

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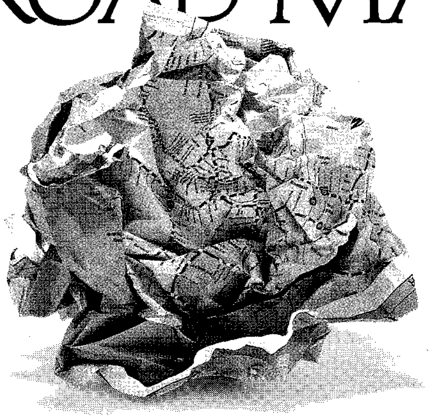

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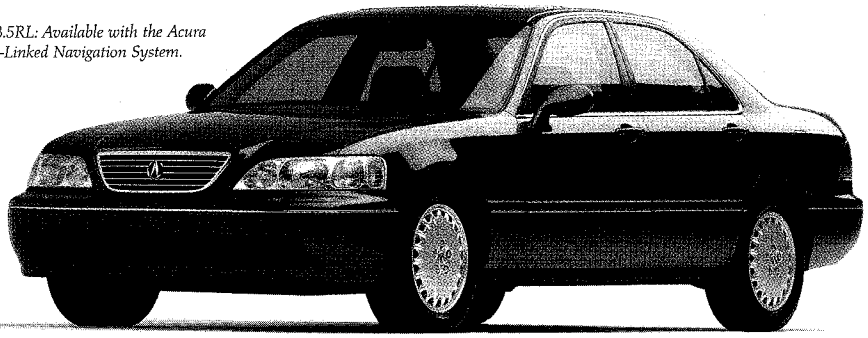

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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

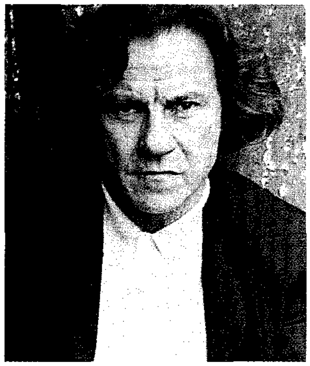
INTELLIGENCER

WHAT HAPPENED TO PETER'S POWERS?

Fran Reiter, the head of **Rudy Giuliani's** re-election bid, is making sure everyone knows who's in charge—and it's not former campaign manager **Peter Powers.** Soon after assuming her position as campaign manager, Reiter "accepted the resignation" of the campaign's head of field operations, **Gerry Rose,** a Powers friend and colleague who had worked during the first three months of the re-election endeavor. She replaced him with **Vincent LaPadula,** the former chief of staff at the department of information technology and telecommunications. "Reiter's showing everyone that she's in charge. Peter's practically obsolete," says a City Hall insider. Reiter says Rose's involvement was always seen as temporary. "When Peter decided not to do the campaign, changes were made. There was never any commitment to Gerry." Was there ever a possibility of Rose's being hired permanently? Reiter says yes but adds, "You have to look at who's running the campaign, and who isn't." Rose would not comment on the matter; Powers could not be reached.

KEITEL'S HEARTBREAK HOTEL

Shades of *Apocalypse Now.* **Harvey Keitel** has left the set of **Stanley Kubrick's** new film, *Eyes Wide Shut,* under a cloud of mystery. Word is that Kubrick did not get along with Keitel (who was fired by **Francis Ford Coppola** in 1976) and replaced him with director **Sydney Pollack,** who made his acting debut in *Tootsie.* Keitel's spokesperson insists that the tough actor took leave of co-stars **Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman,** and **Jennifer Jason Leigh** to star in an upcoming film about a 60-year-old who's convinced he's Elvis Presley. "The reason Harvey is no longer involved in the Kubrick movie is because he is shooting *The Road to Graceland,"* the spokesperson maintains. "He hadn't shot that much of it anyway, and there was a conflict with his production schedule." The film, Kubrick's first since 1987's *Full Metal Jacket,* has been shrouded in secrecy, with actors under a gag order and rumors surfacing about Cruise's wearing a dress in one scene. A spokesman for Kubrick would say only, "I have no idea how to get a comment from Stanley. And I'm not allowed to comment on anything about the film."



Harvey Keitel:
Out of Kubrick's cube

GETTING JUICED IN THE COTTON CLUB

You never know what will happen when you spread gossip, as "Page Six" 's popular **Richard Johnson** found out last Wednesday night when he got a glass of cold orange juice thrown in his face. After midnight at the Cotton Club's Absolut Versace party, Johnson and director **Lyndall Hobbs** were introduced by friends. "Well, I haven't written anything nasty about you *lately,"* Johnson said—at which point Hobbs juiced him right between the eyes. "This wasn't a case where the glass was half empty or half full. It was *full,"* insists an amused Johnson. "I am the victim here." Hobbs's friends accuse the New York *Post* columnist of "writing trash" about her for years (for example, derisively dismissing the journalist turned filmmaker as a model in several items questioning the stability of her seven-year relationship with actor **Al Pacino**). Hobbs, now in Los Angeles to direct **Melanie Griffith** in *Jane,* could not be reached for comment, but a friend reports that she walked out of the Cotton Club right after the incident, "saying she felt better than she had in years." "She's got a good arm," says Johnson. "I'm considering sending Al Pacino my dry-cleaning bill."

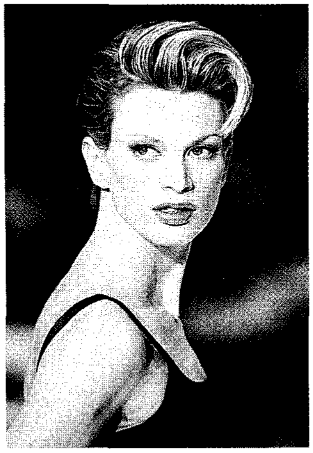
Carolyn Murphy:
Good enough to bite

SEVENTH AVENUE'S DOG DAYS

Not one but two unrestrained dogs threw a wrench into Fashion Week. First, it was reported in the New York *Post* that supermodel **Carolyn Murphy** was taken out of commission when bitten on the mouth by a friend's mutt. Then designer **John Bartlett's** show was almost brought to a halt when his pet pooch "Sweetie" was missing—she'd hidden herself in the corner—just as the curtain was about to go up and **Helena Christensen** and **Valeria** were ready to strut onstage. One observer describes the backstage scene as a chaotic comedy: "There were all these fashion types running around and getting down on their hands and knees, calling, "Sweetie, Sweetie." Says a spokeswoman for Bartlett, "John was frantic. He definitely would have stopped the show had we not found her."

FEAR AND LOATHING ON HUNTER'S MOVIE

The list of those who are no longer trying to bring **Hunter Thompson's** *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* to the silver screen—which includes **Martin Scorsese, Jack Nicholson, Dan Aykroyd,** and the late John Belushi—just grew by one. Director **Alex Cox,** of *Repo Man* and *Sid and Nancy*



Kristen McMenamy:
Versace not an option

Designer Anna:
So Sui me

fame, got axed from the movie-in-the-making last week, although Rhino Films' **Stephen Nemeth** says he still plans to use the script written by Cox and **Tod Davies.** "Cox and Hunter weren't getting along at all," insists one source, but another insider says the dispute was far more prosaic: Evidently, Rhino Films wants to use famous people in cameos, while Cox preferred to hire character actors for the secondary roles. Nemeth denies any disputes, citing the usual "creative differences" to explain the departure. He still wants Cox to direct and adapt another Rhino project. Meanwhile, sources say *Fear and Loathing* has been offered to director **Terry Gilliam.**

KRISTEN VERSUS THE MIGHTY DESIGNER

Veteran cover girl **Kristen McMenamy** lost her poise backstage at the Anna Sui show when she discovered that fellow Ford mannequin **Karen Elson,** a hot newcomer, had just landed the prestigious Versace campaign she had been optioned to do. "Kristen had canceled a bunch of jobs, including the **Donna Karan** show, because she thought she was doing the Versace campaign," explains one modeling-world insider. "When she found out that he was going with a new girl, she became hysterical and started screaming at her agent." The agent had apparently decided to wait until McMenamy's day was over before breaking the news that she wouldn't be involved in the prestigious campaign, being shot by **Richard Avedon.** "Of course an option is just an option," says McMenamy. "But I'm sorry. I'm 32 and I still get my hopes up. They reassured me I was going to get it, so I canceled all this work. I have a baby to support and I just started crying. Now it turns out they optioned a bunch of girls. It's not fair that they have all this power."

POWELL'S PHONE MIS-APPOINTMENT

Adam Clayton Powell IV is having trouble with the phones. The city councilman was supposed to submit his list of community-board candidates by March 31. But that afternoon, he was still combing the West Side to find someone for Board 7. "I know you were interested," Powell purred into the answering machine of one potential candidate. "If you still are, you can have the spot . . . but I need to hear from you today." He never did hear back from that prospect—perhaps because the candidate had moved and Powell had reached the home phone of a senior aide to council member **Ronnie Eldridge.** Powell explains that his list was on time but that one nominee withdrew suddenly, leading him to make the call, which he acknowledged was "a little desperate."

PUBLISHING PIN; CALVIN MOVES IN

A RANDOM GIFT: They may not be giving out gold watches over at Random House, but they are giving out pins. In a memo sent by president and CEO **Philip Maurice Pfeffer,** employees were offered pins with the Random House logo "as a symbol of pride" that could be worn "on a lapel, as a tie tack, or on a shirt pocket or collar." For the truly loyal, cuff links are available for purchase. Says one employee, "I guess they want us to feel like we are in some sort of a secret club. My only regret is that it wasn't a decoder."

Calvin Klein:
Starter house

EINE KLEINE BEACH HAUS: What comes between Calvin and his beach? This summer, it's estranged wife **Kelly Klein,** who gets to entertain her horsey friends in the home between the ocean and a pond in East Hampton. So **Calvin Klein** had to rent—paying a mere $200,000 for the season—down the coast in Wainscott. It's reportedly a typical white contemporary house built in the eighties, "the kind of house he'd rent if he was just starting out and had had one big hit," sniffs a local Realtor who wasn't involved in the deal.

Additional reporting: Kate Coyne

THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL, MAYBE

Talk about a bad-hair day. It seems that the rich and famous don't have to beat up paparazzi or break contracts to get hauled into court—just misdirecting a check will do the trick. A slew of fashion designers and media companies have just been slapped with a hefty lawsuit, all because payments they sent never reached the right hands. Filed by Patriot Funding, the suit points the finger at defendants such as Condé Nast, **Anna Sui, Cynthia Rowley,** Elizabeth Arden, and *Good Housekeeping.* Patriot is the assignee of Oz N.Y., a hairstyling service that works on photo shoots, film sets, and publicity events. The suit claims payment for such jobs was wrongly sent to Oz instead of back to Patriot, the company assigned to collect payment. *Entertainment Weekly* owes a mere $300, but others, like Gramercy Pictures and Propaganda Films, need to cough up more than $12,000 each. "Oz did cash the checks, and we could have dealt with getting the money from them, but we chose to go after the big guys, because they've got more money. It's also more fun," says **Michael Shanker,** Patriot's attorney. Representatives for all defendants had no comment on the matter. Shanker predicts the matter will soon be settled out of court. "The law is clear-cut," he says, "and we're really good lawyers."

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Big Pictures/Stills/Retna; Deborah Feingold/Outline; Marineau/Stills/Retna.

a film by Christopher Reeve

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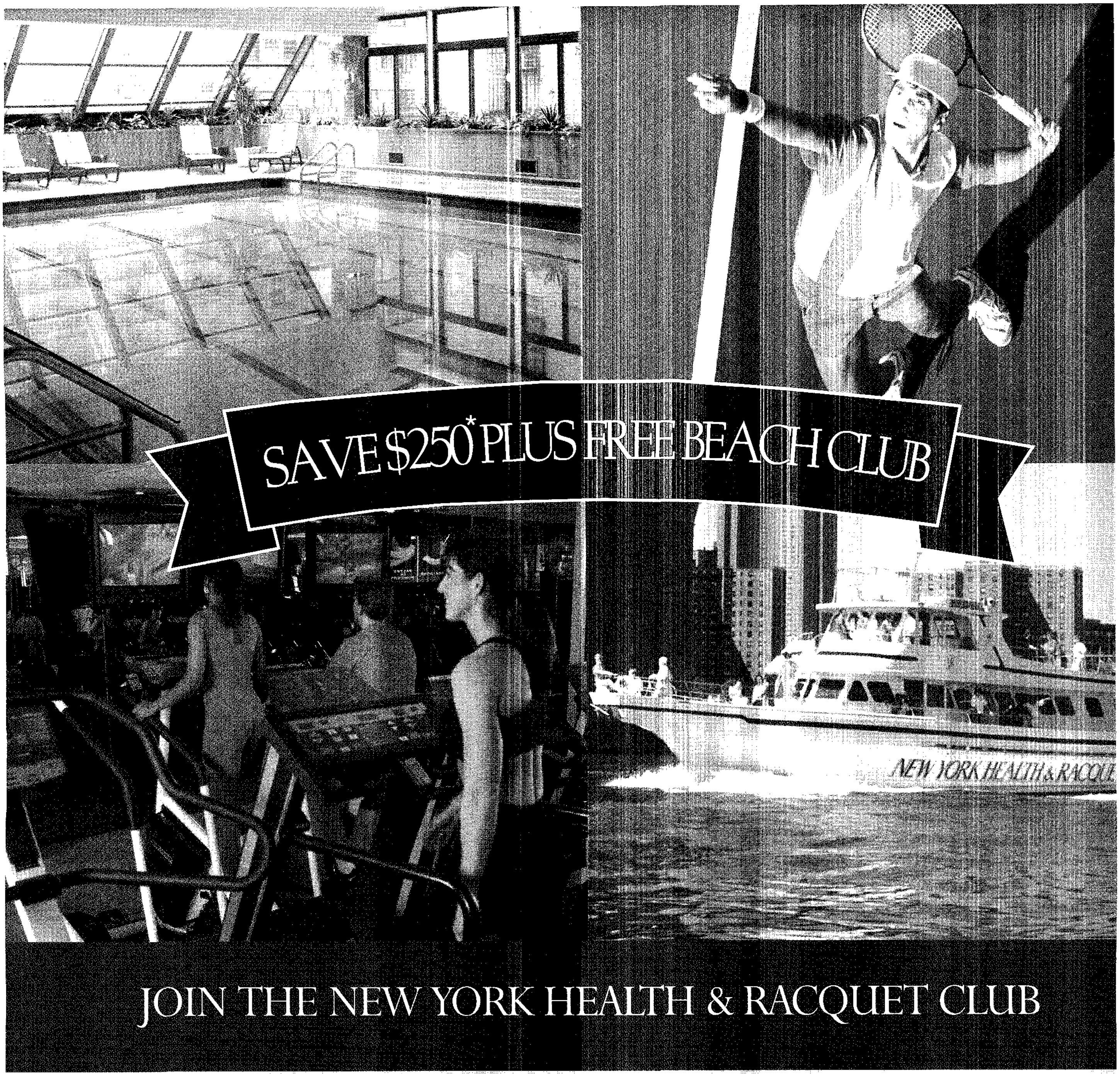
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GOTHAM

Manhattan, at its center, inspires utterly baseless optimism—*Kurt Vonnegut*

Shelter

DON'T HATE THEM BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEAUTIFUL LIVING QUARTERS

A BUILDING WHOSE ONLY RESIDENTS are tall, young, slim, beautiful girls is bound to provoke speculation, which is exactly what happened with a boarding house called Magenta Marquez. "The neighbors would see the girls coming in and out all day long and at night," says a former boarder, "limousines coming and picking us up, and coming home at five o'clock in the morning—at first, a lot of the neighbor people thought this was a house of prostitution."

While the girls do in a sense make a living with their bodies, they are not prostitutes. They're models. Magenta Marquez, the city's only model boarding house, was started two years ago by Carlos Almada and his 20-year-old fiancée, Frouke, a Next model. "It started because we know lots of models and we know owners of agencies socially," Almada says.

Together, the two have solved the housing problems of 25 competing agencies without offering the incentive of a commission or other compensation. "A lot of love went into this," says Almada, "and the girls give it back to us."

After arriving in New York in 1982 with a degree in architecture, the Brazilian-Argentine made forays into real estate and nightclubs (he owned The Building) but ultimately distinguished himself among the downtown demimonde as a set designer at the Public Theater. These days, the most beautiful girls in the world consider themselves lucky to pay him $800 a month for a place in the former factory where he's lived for a number of years.

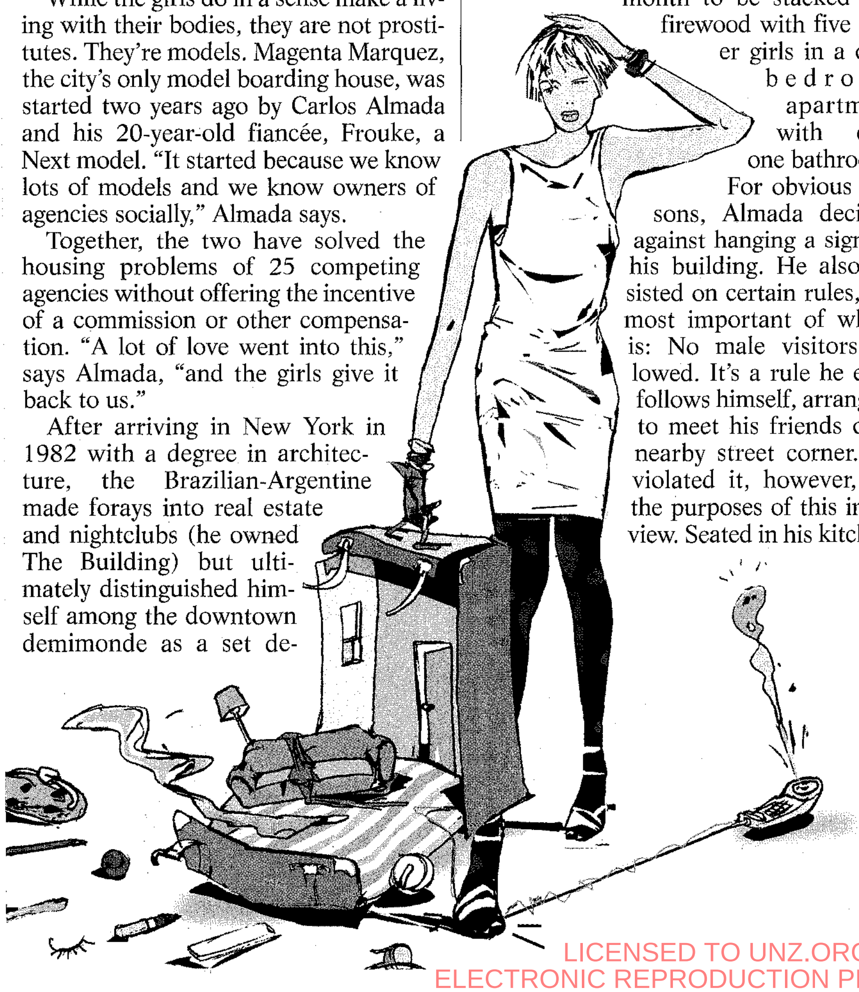
"We have the line below the top models," he says. "They are on the cover of the magazines today, but they're not the top models that we know. They will share a room." For the fledgling models without friends or family to house them in New York, the private and semiprivate rooms at Magenta Marquez are a less expensive option than paying upward of $900 a month to be stacked like firewood with five other girls in a one-bedroom apartment with only one bathroom.

For obvious reasons, Almada decided against hanging a sign on his building. He also insisted on certain rules, the most important of which is: No male visitors allowed. It's a rule he even follows himself, arranging to meet his friends on a nearby street corner. He violated it, however, for the purposes of this interview. Seated in his kitchen, which is decorated with paintings by Jean-Michel Basquiat, among others, he thumbed through two enormous guest registers. They're filled with composite photos, affectionate farewell notes, inside jokes, numerous crayon portraits, the odd set of footprints in paint, and the forwarding addresses and phone numbers of nearly every model the place has housed. There are well over 100, an impressive number considering that Magenta Marquez has an approximate capacity of fifteen, and a number of models have stayed as long as three months at a time. "The only bad thing I've ever heard about him is that he can be too fatherly, but what would you expect from a young girl who's told to be home at a reasonable hour?" says agency owner Irene Marie.

But his willingness to do just about anything for his tenants is what's chiefly responsible for his success in importing pensione-style model accommodations. Says Almada, "It's more than renting a room to somebody, it's more like a family thing. We mother them." Unlike most other landlords, he's unruffled by late-night phone calls from former tenants in need of immediate relationship counseling. Karen Ferrari says, "I call him every day. I'm like, 'Ha-low? Carlito!' " Ferrari adds, "When I moved out and got an apartment, Carlos and his girlfriend brought me a mattress and put it in. And when I got evicted, they helped me move my stuff out."

On one occasion, Almada and Frouke stayed up until dawn helping one tenant decide to check into rehab. *His* biggest problem so far? "They were breaking all the phones," Almada says, laughing. "So I replaced them with steel-based ones! In my opinion, they have arguments with their boyfriends and they hang up hard."

MICHAEL ROVNER



Observance

WHY IS THIS SEDER DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHER SEDERS?

ON THE SEDER PLATES AT BRIDGEWATER'S IN the South Street Seaport, where nearly 1,200 girls and women and a smattering of men gathered last week to celebrate

Ma'yan's feminist Seder at Breakwater's.

an early Passover, were all the traditional elements: bitter herbs (symbolizing the taste of slavery), salt water (recalling the Israelites' tears), and the shredded-apple-wine-and-walnut paste (the mortar used to build pyramids). But there was also, incongruously, an orange.

Why an orange? The relatively recent genre of Jewish feminist folklore supplies an answer: Once, a woman speaking at a synagogue was told by a man that women belong in positions of Jewish authority as much as bread—forbidden during the eight days of Passover—belongs on a Seder plate. She told him that women belong in such roles the way an orange belongs on a Seder plate—an item not found in traditional Judaism but one not prohibited, either.

The voices of Jewish women—even those biblical characters who were central to the Exodus—have historically been almost completely absent from the text that guides each Passover seder celebration, the Haggadah. Twenty-one years ago, Jewish feminism's creative and intellectual elite decided to try to change all that, when women including writers Letty Cottin Pogrebin and Esther Broner held the first feminist Seders. Ma'yan, an Upper West Side–based Jewish feminist organization, organized this year's Seders, which have multiplied in size each of the three years it has sponsored them.

The Ma'yan Seders celebrate Moses' sister, Miriam; their mother, Yocheved; and the two midwives, Shifra and Puah, whose refusal to follow the pharaoh's instructions to drown all male babies was the first subversive step by women in the Jewish resistance against enslavement.

Tamara Cohen, Ma'yan's program director and an editor of its new Haggadah, and its rabbinic director, Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell, led the Seders. Women brought aunts and friends, daughters on the cusp of puberty, and mothers long settled into old age.

Some of the service's liturgical language has been feminized, and the women who, in the traditional texts, have been given no words of their own were honored with stories and songs. Miriam's cup was added to Elijah's, and each of the four cups of wine traditionally consumed was dedicated at this Seder to a Jewish woman whose story was recalled and retold.

The four questions, traditionally asked by the four sons, were asked in this ritual by daughters: the daughter in search of a usable past, the daughter who wants to erase her difference, the daughter who does not know she has a place at the table, and the daughter who asks no questions.

For many of the women who participate, the feminist Seders are more meaningful than any they've celebrated before. "Seders are the centerpiece of our Jewish year, since we're not kosher and don't light candles or do anything else on Shabbat," said Ronnie Wiener, a Manhattan resident who attended for the first time and brought her 12- and 16-year-old daughters. "There was a lot of joy at the Seder, and that's the secret to keeping people active in the religion." DEBRA NUSSBAUM COHEN

Site Lines

A BUDDHIST TEMPLE RISES OUT OF A B-MOVIE PALACE

THE COLONNADE THAT MARKS THE WEST end of the Manhattan Bridge has always seemed like too much, more grandeur than is merited by either the span itself or its lackluster Canal Street surroundings.

Now, however, this hunk of neoclassical stone overstatement has company: an unabashedly vivid, canary-yellow Buddhist temple with its very own colonnade, a row of columns in fire-engine red.

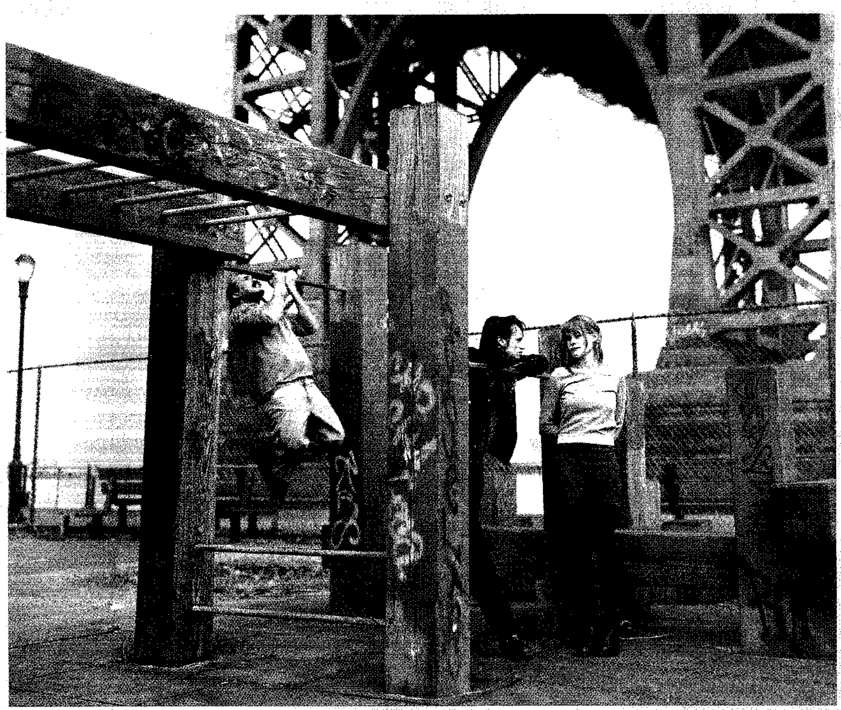
The boxy building on the north side of Canal, just shy of the bridge entrance, was formerly the Rosemary Theater, home of kung fu films and celestial epics.

"Everybody stays home and sees videos," a temple employee said with a shrug, explaining why the theater shut its doors last year. Winston Dong, executive director of Chinatown's Museum of Chinese in the Americas, confirms that movie theaters no longer occupy a central place in Chinese community life, having been displaced by videos and undermined by the perception that theaters are "crime-ridden and dirty."

The rooftop billboard advertising Kool cigarettes remains, but in all other ways, the Rosemary has been reborn as the Mahayana Temple.

At the temple's grand opening last week, saffron-robed monks stood under

SHOT



Under Williamsburg Bridge, 4 P.M., Sunday, April 6, 1997, *photographed by Greg Miller.*

Photograph by Elinoar Astrinsky.

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the former movie marquee, which is now disguised with pagoda-style flourishes, and cut a long red ribbon with golden scissors.

Another set of monks opened the temple doors with a giant key, and a mob of spectators bearing flowers and cash offerings crammed the antechamber, blocking the way to the large auditorium. There, the movie screen has been replaced by a fifteen-foot-tall Buddha encircled by a glowing blue neon tube.

The largest and most accessible of the dozen or so Buddhist temples in Chinatown—which are often hidden upstairs and behind locked doors—the Mahayana is notable for its lavish interior and the fact that the décor was made in America, not imported from China. The shiny red wall covering, for example, is Formica rather than lacquer, and the Buddha was cast by a New York City firm.

Visitors can leave offerings of lucky oranges at the Buddha's feet or, for a small donation, receive a fortune in Chinese or English.

"Bad weather," counsels one message plucked from a bowl near the door, "does not stop a small bird, as it persists in building its nest. Under conditions bad and absurd, with flying colors you'll pass the test." KARRIE JACOBS

Golden glow: A new Buddha for Chinatown.

LEGENDS

Nyro and Ginsberg: Kaddish

I saw Allen Ginsberg read in Ithaca, New York, in the summer of 1981, when I was a 22-year-old aspiring writer and he was 55. I barely knew his work. I remembered him mostly as an icon from the glossy photographs in *Life* magazine that constituted my childhood contact with the real world. *Life* was the MTV of the sixties, perfect for children, easily digestible. In this context, Ginsberg was a quaint flower child who went nude a lot, and I still thought of him as a slightly foolish relic of the long-ago Summer of Love.

So when he walked onstage in a small auditorium in a rumpled suit, looking happily his age and toting a harmonium—on which he promptly accompanied himself singing William Blake's "The Lamb"—it occurred to me that he belonged to a tradition of poets who elevated foolishness to a kind of transcendent joy. As an undergraduate, I had learned that a poem was a discrete, crafted object so formidable in structure and obscure in meaning that it couldn't just be read, it had to be "explicated." Ginsberg changed all that in an hour. He sang his "Capitol Air," a poem that begins, simply, "I don't like the government where I live," and goes on through a litany of dislikes, including the KGB, the CIA, and "Leftists insisting we got the mystic Fix." He didn't sound like a sixties liberal, or a raving angry queer. He was a middle-aged man in owl-eye glasses, bearded and slightly lisping, sitting in a straight-backed chair and singing a lesson, the way my second-grade teacher had sung the rules of grammar. There was something chaste and biblical about him, despite his Jersey accent and his giddy desire for men.

He was also, sometimes insipidly, an optimist. He took as his point of departure a critique of lethal forties American innocence, but he did it with the era's characteristic faith in human effort. It was a cheerful dismay, an unironic voice of youthful rage that is beyond the range of people born after Kennedy's assassination. Even when he's bitter or crazy, "starving hysterical naked," he's in earnest. I used to see him coming out of the 2nd Avenue Deli or walking on St. Marks Place, and I noticed how frail he looked, and how contented. He may be the last person in America to ever get famous for living simply and writing poetry. And that, finally, sadly, seems almost as rare an accomplishment as creating "Howl" and "Kaddish" and putting his queer shoulder to the wheel. JOHN WEIR

If you were 17 in 1968, looking for someone to give you permission to be different and proof that you were hip, Laura Nyro's *Eli and the Thirteenth Confession* was what you were waiting for. *Eli* was a concept album as ambitious as the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's*. The story it told was basically Nyro's: a 20-year-old Bronx-born, black-haired daughter of a trumpet-playing piano tuner, a woman who was way ahead of most of her fans in her experiments with cocaine, LSD, and same-sex lovemaking—and eager to celebrate all of them. Her music sounded like nothing ever pressed into vinyl before, melding gospel, Motown, jazz, rock and roll, and the blues: "They were all there," said Judy Barnett, one of the legion of singers who have recorded Nyro's music, everyone from Aretha Franklin to Frank Sinatra; Peter, Paul and Mary; Barbra Streisand; the Fifth Dimension; and Three Dog Night. Nyro herself dubbed her sound "bright gospel rock." Patti Labelle always told Nyro she was a "black woman in a white girl's body," and Nyro proved that in 1971 when she teamed up with Labelle to create *Gonna Take a Miracle*, one of the greatest collections of black music ever recorded by a white singer.

Nyro was an icon for a new generation—as Judy Garland had been an icon for hers—but the fanatical fans who attended Nyro's Carnegie Hall concerts at Thanksgiving were equally divided among men and women and gays and straights, a living tribute to a new religion rooted in diversity. After the seventies her cult shrank, but it continued to gather to hear her at intimate venues, including the Bottom Line on many Christmas Eves. Because most of her biggest hits were recorded by other artists, her name never became as famous as her music. But she was just as talented as Lennon, Joplin, Hendrix, and the rest of the sixties pantheon whose lives were even shorter than hers. CHARLES KAISER

Allen Ginsberg, June 3, 1926–April 5, 1997.
Laura Nyro, October 18, 1947–April 8, 1997.

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Zubin Shroff; Personality Photos Inc.; William Coupon/Gamma Liaison.

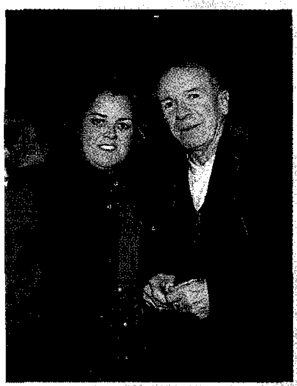
THE SCENE

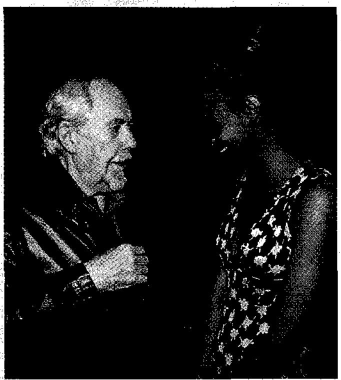
The Shows Must Go On

Fashion week brought Oscar Night ostentation to the city. And at least some of the celebrants were talking about the clothes.

Photographed by Patrick McMullan

Clockwise from above, Jada Pinkett and Will Smith at Ace Gallery for the Versus fall fashion show; Iris Palmer and Chrystelle backstage at hat designer Philip Treacy's first New York runway show; Aidan Quinn, Willem Dafoe, and Steve Buscemi at B. Smith's, where they celebrated the Broadway premiere of the Wooster Group's *The Hairy Ape*.





Clockwise from far left, Rosie O'Donnell and Terrence McNally at 21 for a screening of *Love! Valour! Compassion!*; Robert Altman and Georgianna Robertson at Cheetah celebrating the opening of the Serge Sorokko Gallery's "The Last Party: Nightworld in Photographs"; Brad Johns with High Voltage at the opening of his new salon; Tim Robbins, Angel Dormer, and Susan Sarandon at the Beauty/Hair Cares party, following Todd Oldham's 7th on Sixth show.

Taxes

APRIL 15 ELECTIONEERING: WHO MADE THE CUT?

FREE POLITICAL ADVERTISING IS ONE OF INcumbency's greatest spoils: President Bill Clinton can step into the Rose Garden for a morning of televised chest-thumping; Representative Floyd Flake can bury his constituents under a pile of taxpayer-funded newsletters; and Governor George Pataki can wax self-congratulating through public-service announcements, billboards at rest stops, and—at this time of year, anyway—instructions for the New York State tax returns.

"The 1996 tax year continues the second year of a three-year tax cut enacted by George Pataki and the State Legislature," boasts the cheery, if inelegant, 1996 epistle from the governor's commissioner of taxation and finance, Michael H. Urbach. "Overall, the three-year personal income tax reduction program will lower taxes by more than $6 billion. This represents a 25 percent cut for three-quarters of our taxpayers."

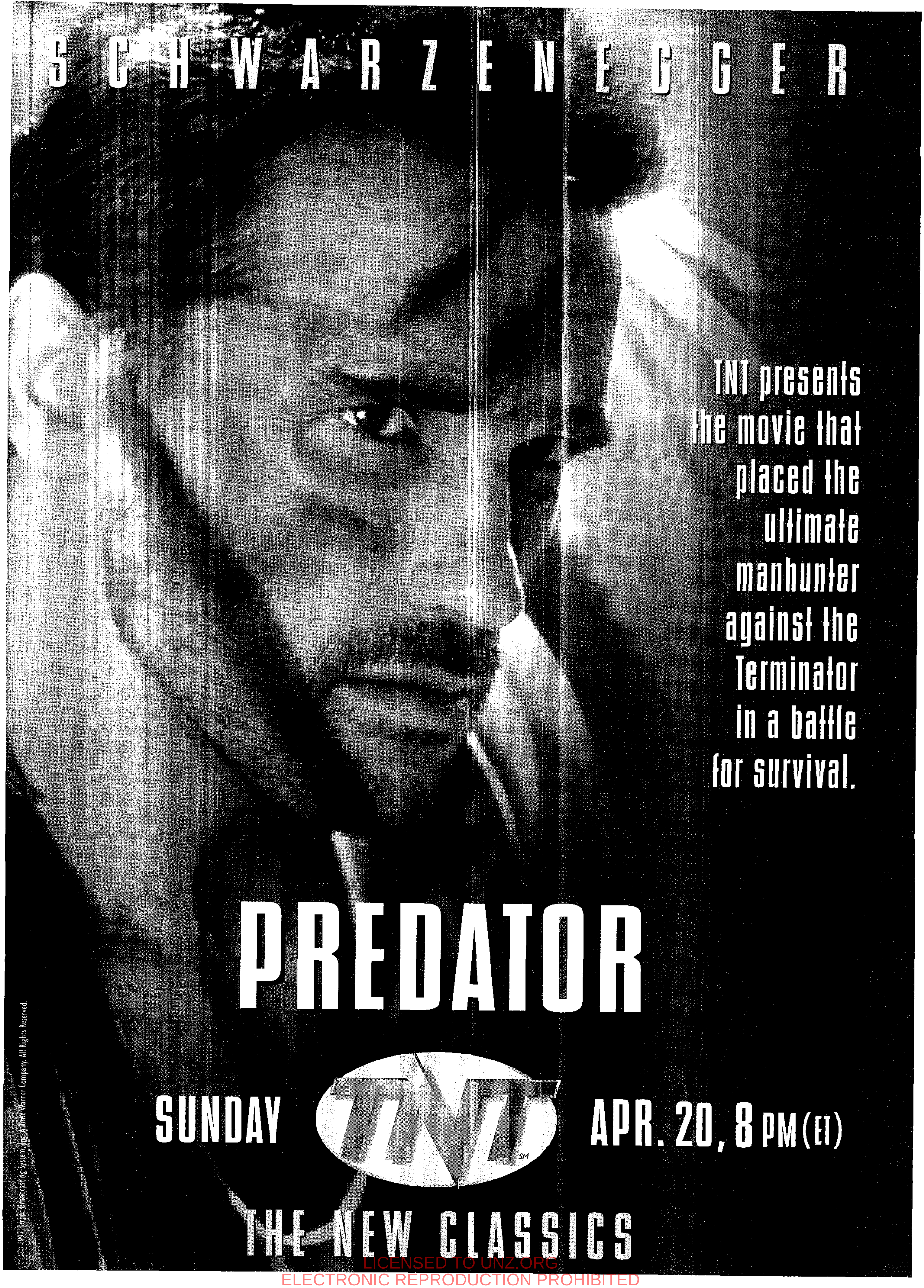
Pataki's unblushing use of a public document to link this particular accomplishment to his name galls the usual Democratic suspects, who note that these reductions were part of a bipartisan budget bill. "It's crass," complains Patricia Lynch, the spokeswoman for Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. "This is another fifteen-second TV spot for George Pataki at the taxpayers' expense," sniffs Judith Hope, chair of the New York State Democratic Committee.

"Nonsense," retorts Marvin Nailor, Urbach's spokesman. "All the commissioner is doing is stating fact. Many taxpayers would not know of the tax cuts if they hadn't had that message. You can't assume that every person in New York State who fills in an income-tax form knows what the government is doing for them."

And if New York Democrats think that Pataki is taking shameless advantage of his resources, they should check out what's happening across the river. Christine Todd Whitman, whose term expires this November, has gone so far as to attach a personal note to the Garden State's NJ-1040. Not only does it gush about her various tax-reduction plans, but it invites taxpayers to write in with comments to a specially created P.O. box called Our Tax Dollars.

Nailor suspects the Democrats are just jealous—and a tad bitter. "Taxes were going up, taxes were frozen—there was nothing positive to report to the taxpayers during the prior administration," Nailor chuckles. "There may a little bit of sour grapes involved here."

JENNIFER SENIOR



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THE NEW CLASSICS

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THE IMAGE BARBARA LIPPERT

About Last Nite

In an age of premillennial angst, Nickelodeon's Nick at Nite serves up reheated TV comfort food laced with a pinch of irony.

THE POWER OF OLD TV IS SUCH that it's become the only history we honestly share.

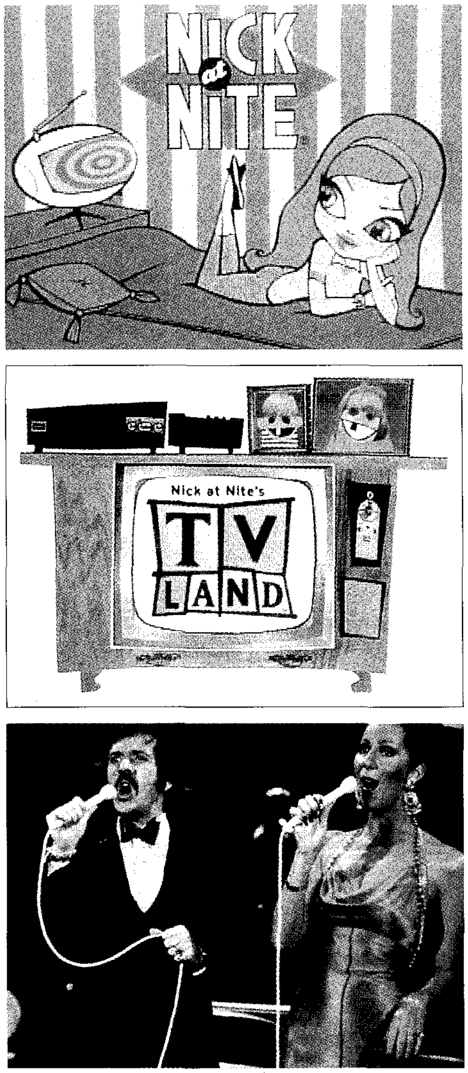
While everybody knows that aging programs never die—they just live in perpetual syndication on odd channels—Nick at Nite, the cable phenomenon that bills itself as "classic TV" or "TV you can trust," has taken repackaging to a masterly level. Think of it as a postmodern all-night diner serving up such electronic comfort food as *The Bob Newhart Show, The Mary Tyler Moore Show,* and *I Love Lucy.*

Watching Nick at Nite with the wee ones is a way for liberals and the otherwise Fallwellphobic to indulge in an evening of family values without being treacly. Nineties families get to reenact that fifties version of togetherness—everyone gathered in front of the bulky box with the little glowing screen. But kids and grown-ups can tune in with varying levels of awareness and irony.

Baby-boomers have a chance to re-experience the weirdly sanitized content of the *Mayberry, R.F.D.* decades, knowing full well that Opie's hair has since receded to a fringe. Twentysomethings, raised on campy reruns in the seventies, can process the prerecorded values and laugh tracks in a whole new way. They can also study whether their own polyester flares and wide collars measure up to the originals worn with Dingo boots on *Welcome Back, Kotter.*

And little kids feel like they're getting snapshots from mom and dad's childhood—if not a whole home movie. Take the evening Nick offered up a theme night from 1972, in which *The Brady Bunch, The Partridge Family,* and *Room 222* were on back-to-back. "Mom," said my 7-year-old son, Lex, "you had to *live* through this?"

The other uniquely Nick thing is that children who watch such kids-only programming as *Rugrats, Doug,* and *Alex Mack* on Nickelodeon by day drag their parents to *The Munsters* or *Happy Days* on Nick at Nite. The child as the father of family viewing choices has odd implications: Nick at Nite succeeds in part because it acts as an emotional correction to the in-your-face aggression of the contemporary TV market—not only from the my-gay-lover's-a-ho school of trash, but even from the grim reality of *ER.* Nick research shows that working women feel they have so little free time at night to relax that they don't want to be assaulted, even by the truth. And if they can spend their ever-diminishing downtime tuning into some innocuous historical oddity with their kids—as if watching *Petticoat Junction* were practically a trip to a museum—that's even better.



Retro-contempo a go-go: A sample of Nick's graphics and a reprise of the singing Bonos.

Which is not to suggest that the retreads are without, as we now say, issues. The drinking, the smoking, the ethnic jokes, the sexism, are quite appalling. We may have loved Lucy for not being Donna Reed, but we now see that in her desperate attempts to get out of the house, the poor thing was a perfect case study for *The Feminine Mystique.* She also appeared to spend a good deal of her time buying lighters and emptying ashtrays. But part of the pleasure is being able to watch from a 20- or 30-year distance, so any mediocre sitcom is remastered into an ironic, recontextualized, pomo vision. And sometimes dumb shows just grow on you. Of *Bewitched,* Lex had this to say: "At first we didn't like it too much, but now we like it more."

This is what Nick at Nite specializes in—the rewrapping to make things ironically familiar. One of the network's logos is a drawing of an idealized *Leave It to Beaver* neighborhood with a giant, glowing TV set plunked smack in the middle, like a Soviet-era statue of Lenin. Nick's graphics—a Sputnik-meets-the-Beats aesthetic they've dubbed *retro-contempo*—can be credited with helping to fuel the martini-lounge trend.

"We decided that TV was a service, so we created a friendly, aim-to-please, retro-looking design using fifties service language," says Tom Harbeck, senior vice president of creative services. Indeed, the network's cohesive promos and wraparounds allow us to identify with something big, a higher Nickness that transcends individual stars or programs. In a clouded televisual universe, Nick provides us with graphic, if not moral, authority. Mom and Dad are in the house.

Nick's success has spawned a sibling channel called Nick at

Photographs courtesy of Nickelodeon.

Nite's TV Land, unearthing a broader range of dead TV (dramas, variety shows, and Westerns). TV Land is not yet available in New York (as Rupert Murdoch found, it's tough to get in the door here). So on April 29 Nick will run "TV Land's Really Big Show," an evening that includes the dirty performance that got the Doors canned from *Ed Sullivan* and episodes of *The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour.* It's so painful to re-watch the long-haired, gnarly-toothed, sparkly-gowned mononymic diva's interaction with the mustachioed, bowl-haired future congressman that you'll have new sympathy for the mid-nineties hair-care-infomercial Cher. In this particular half hour, the Bonos sing with Donny and Marie Osmond; all four wear red turtleneck letter sweaters, like Alvin and the Chipmunks, and chirp "Love Will Keep Us Together."

DIANE ROBINA, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT FOR programming, says plainly, "Memory tends to be more fond than reality. We've looked at everything and pulled out only the best shows. A lot of them don't hold up. And there was a lot of crap made in the seventies."

In fact, some of the shows that have turned into camp delicacies were virtually ignored in their initial runs. Take *The Partridge Family.* Even with all those shag haircuts on a psychedelic bus led by happening mom Shirley Jones and teenage heartthrob David Cassidy, it "never cracked the top ten in prime time," Robina says. "It really became a hit only after it went into syndication." The much-revered *Brady Bunch* was on from 1969 to 1974 but became a cultural touchstone only after being placed in syndication later in the seventies.

The Brady Bunch, of course, now appears on college syllabi as an object of Talmudic attention. That's because at a time when the nation was in an unpopular war—both in Vietnam and in suburban cul-de-sacs—the Bradys were a testament to the fact that three brunettes and three blondes could happily bunch. (Dr. Will Miller, Nick's "teletherapist," maintains that the famous staircase in the Brady house had twelve steps, offering visual foreshadowing to a culture soon to discover the word *dysfunctional.*)

It turns out that the Heaven's Gaters may have had it backward. The mother ship landed long ago, and we just keep traveling back to that electronic cocoon-womb, acquiring new levels of understanding and more layers of protection as we watch. ▬

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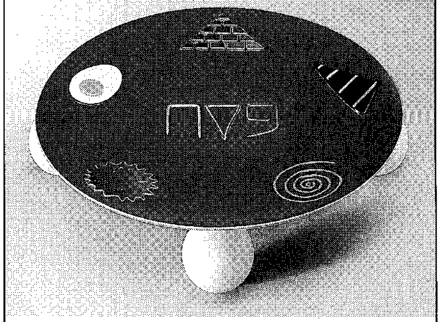

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Glass Passover Plate by Kerry Feldman. Photo: John Parnell

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NEW MEDIA ANDREW L. SHAPIRO

Cyber Seduction

Could it be that New York's redundant, unconstitutional Internet-indecency law is more useful for scoring political points than for protecting children?

"I WAS DOING MY TAXES LAST night," says ACLU attorney Ann Beeson, "and I thought to myself, I can't believe what my tax dollars are being spent on. This really annoys me."

Beeson, 33, doesn't just have the annual IRS blues. Rather, she's wondering why the State of New York is going to the trouble and expense of defending a dubious new cyberporn law that she and the ACLU are currently challenging in federal court on behalf of a coalition of libraries, publishers, and others. Enacted last November, the state law makes it a felony to transmit "indecent" material to a minor over the Internet.

Wait a minute. Didn't Congress already try to ban indecency on the Net? Well, yes—that's precisely why Beeson is rankled. It turns out the New York law is eerily similar to the federal Communications Decency Act (CDA) enacted in February 1996 and now under review by the Supreme Court.

Enforcement of the CDA was blocked on First Amendment grounds by two federal courts—including one in Manhattan—before Governor Pataki signed the New York bill into law. Most legal observers expect the Supreme Court to strike down the CDA as an excessively broad restriction on free speech.

You'd think New York pols would get the hint that their cybersmut law—in many respects a clone of the CDA—was dead in the water. So why is the state attorney general persistently defending the law? The answer lies, as usual, in the details—and in politics. Because in addition to banning cyberporn à la the CDA, the state law contains a provision, which the ACLU isn't challenging, making it a more serious felony to use indecent speech online to induce a minor to engage in sex. Therein lies the real bugaboo behind the bill—pedophilia.

Indecent politics: The ACLU's Ann Beeson thinks the state's new cyber law is unworkable.

IN 1994, WESTCHESTER DISTRICT ATTORney Jeanine Ferris Pirro prosecuted a Seattle man, Alan Paul Barlow, who exchanged sexually suggestive e-mail with a 14-year-old New York girl and later came to visit her, only to be caught by the police. Pirro, who's done much as a prosecutor to raise awareness about child abuse, was distressed that she could only charge Barlow with a misdemeanor count of endangering the welfare of a child, to which he pleaded guilty. To give her stronger ammunition in the future, Pirro—a Republican who is said to have aspirations for higher office—lobbied state legislators and her crony Pataki to pass the new law.

Indecent material is defined in the state's law as that which "depicts actual or simulated nudity, sexual conduct or sado-masochistic abuse, and which is harmful to minors." To be prosecuted under the transmission provision that is under attack, a Net user must—follow closely now—know the content of his communication but not necessarily know it is harmful to a minor (a standard which, incidentally, is not defined in the law). Nor must the user intend to communicate, or actually know whether he has communicated, with a minor in order to be guilty. Rather, he must simply have "reason to believe" that he has.

Here's where ignorance of the Net makes for bad law. Since there's not yet a reliable way for all who communicate online to screen out kids, anyone talking in a chat room or posting material on the Web has "reason to believe" his messages may reach a child—and can be thrown in jail for up to four years.

It was this prospect that led New York City artist Rudolf Kinsky to remove several works of art depicting nudity from his virtual gallery space on the Web. Kinsky and others testified at a hearing on April 7 before Judge Loretta Preska about the chilling effect the law was having on their speech. Maurice Freedman, of the Westchester public libraries, for example, suggested that librarians might be prosecuted if minors who use online card catalogues found a title such as the rapper Ice-T's book *The Ice Opinion: Who Gives a Fuck?*

The changes to the New York penal code were undoubtedly born of real anxieties. But the state's convoluted defense of the law shows it for what it really is: a cynical attempt to capitalize on parents' fears about protecting their children. Stories of rape and other violence resulting from online contacts have gotten banner treatment in the media, but the truth is, such incidents have been made

Photograph by Sam Erickson.

to appear more prevalent than they are. Pirro herself recently displayed a flair for exaggerated rhetoric when she said that "there was a time when a pedophile . . . would make contact with kids in a playground. . . . Now our kids are being molested in the privacy of our own homes when they're working on a computer."

And yet, having raised the specter of legions of cyberperverts preying on children, at the trial the state's lawyers presented evidence of only one case of an adult transmitting indecent material to a minor online, and it was arguably already illegal under existing law. Elsewhere in its defense, the state has been equally tepid—even self-defeating. For example, it argued that the law covers only graphic, not textual, depictions of indecency. This interpretation flies in the face of the statute's language and, moreover, would substantially undermine the state's child-protection rationale. Online pedophiles like Alan Paul Barlow generally use words, not pictures, to lure children.

Though the state originally said it would put six witnesses on the stand (including Jeanine Pirro, who was withdrawn at the last minute when the court suggested that her testimony would have limited value), the only one it produced was a child-porn investigator from Buffalo whose testimony Judge Preska repeatedly questioned as irrelevant.

Why didn't Governor Pataki and Attorney General Dennis Vacco put more resources behind this case? Perhaps because they knew all along that the law in question was deeply flawed. (Neither official returned calls requesting comment.)

AS FOR THE ANTI-SEDUCTION PART OF THE law, it is unclear what it achieves. Soliciting a minor is already a felony in New York. The new provision merely criminalizes indecent *online* solicitation. Even then, Ann Beeson asks, "Why would New York only want to make it criminal to lure a child with indecency over the Internet? This law would not prevent someone from giving a copy of *Hustler* to a kid at a playground for the purpose of seducing him."

Of course, just because a law is duplicative or illogical doesn't make it wrong. But it does feed the impression that it was passed with more of an eye toward politics than toward child protection. If lawmakers really wanted to crack down on pedophilia, they could simply have increased penalties in the existing law. That would have saved Beeson and Internet users a lot of trouble. ■

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Photo by Mary Bloom
Keith Reinhard, Chairman & CEO, DDB Needham Worldwide with 7 week old "Virginia."

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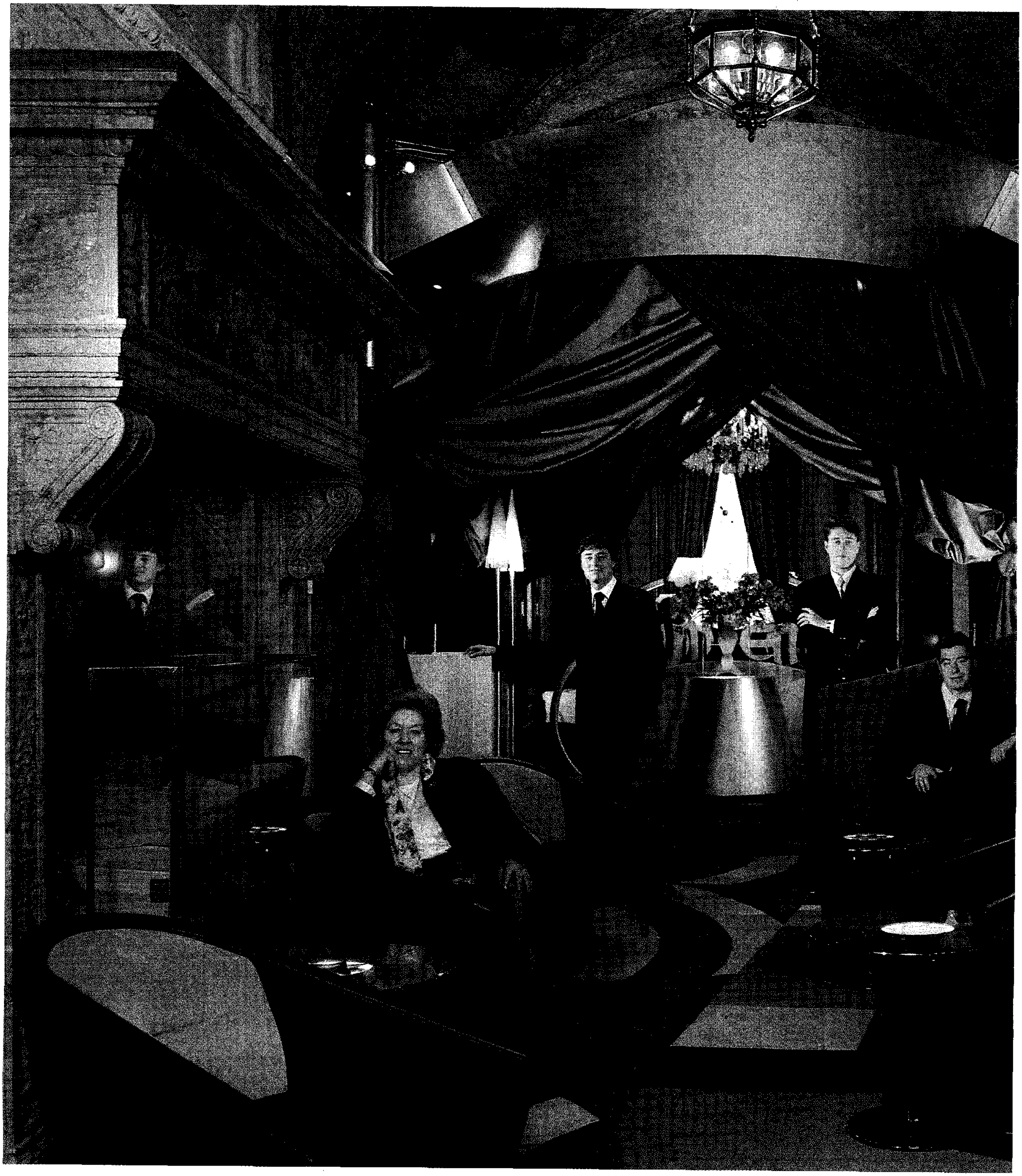
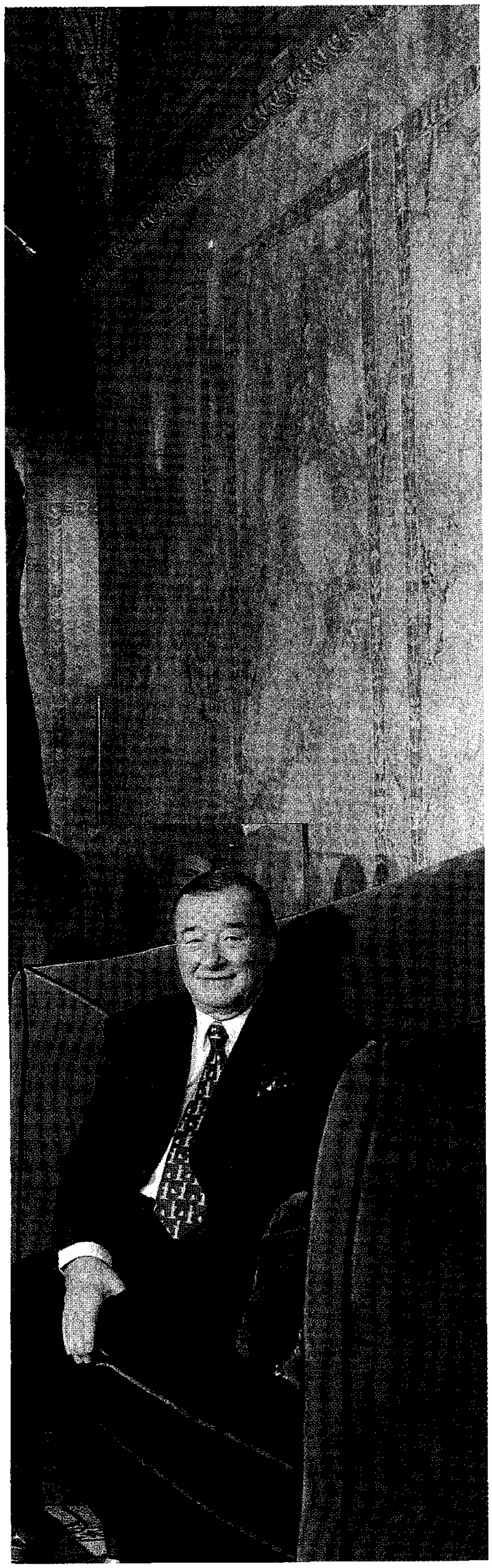


Grooming by Michiel Sanders for Judy Casey.

LE CIRQUE



The most fabulous restaurant ever is now playing the Palace Hotel. But will its flashy new digs be to Henry Kissinger's taste? By Peter Kaminsky

"THEY ARE EITHER GOING TO GIVE us a medal or exile us to Kilimanjaro," Sirio Maccioni said, tossing a glance at the futuristic bar going up inside the New York Palace hotel. It was as if a scene from *Blade Runner* had somehow found its way into an Edith Wharton novel: Giant torchères illuminate pre-Raphaelite murals; stainless-steel and neon tubing loop acrobatically above low-slung armchairs with the sexy silhouette of Manolo Blahnik heels. Over in the main dining room, plush banquettes and high-backed chairs are a deep-purple velvet. The grill room's red-and-white light columns look Deco by way of the *Cat in the Hat.* ■ Can this be Le Cirque? On May 1, a racy reincarnation of the East 65th Street temple of haute cuisine and swellegance—where Sirio Maccioni presided for 22 years of truffles, Kir Royales, and caviar—will open in midtown. But will the ladies who subsist on lettuce and Pellegrino bestow a noisy air

THE MACCIONI DYNASTY: CLOCKWISE, EGIDIANA, MARCO, MARIO, MAURO, AND PATERFAMILIAS SIRIO.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW BORDWIN
FOR NEW YORK

kiss on Maccioni's rejuvenated big top, now called Le Cirque 2000? Or will they be forced to find a new feeding station because Adolfo doesn't play well with violet upholstery?

It's a good thing Sirio isn't easily rattled. But then, he has always had a talent for maintaining "the controlled chaos" of a happening restaurant. It is what catapulted him from the hardscrabble Tuscan village of Montstumano into the rarefied precinct of the Upper East Side. His commanding personality and well-honed charm made the cramped original space in the Mayfair Hotel feel more like a mess hall for the global power elite. Nowhere else would you find Elle MacPherson at one table, Henry Kissinger at another, and 46 takeout lunches being delivered down the street to His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

OVER THE BIG TOP? IN THE MAIN DINING ROOM, CHAIRS WITH CLOWN-BUTTON SPINES.

So why pull up stakes?

In 1995, the James Beard Foundation singled out Le Cirque as the nation's best restaurant. Sirio was completely booked for every seating. The grandees of French cuisine had all been there, designating it their *chez nous* away from home—quite an accomplishment, since Europeans tend to hold American restaurants in the same high regard that Manhattan drama lovers do suburban dinner theater.

"I always remember what Pierre Franey told me about Pavillon," says Bryan Miller, food critic for the Microsoft's New York Sidewalks city guide and former New York *Times* restaurant critic. Le Pavillon, on 55th Street, was the fifties forebear of Le Cirque and its ilk. "He said people are very proprietary about dining spaces. It was the beginning of the end when the Pavillon moved from 55th to 57th. The same thing happened to Quilted Giraffe when it moved. But then, neither of those places had a front-of-the-house guy like Sirio. At Le Cirque, one had a sense of electricity in the crowded room that only he could manage. The energy didn't come from the room. Its source was Sirio."

"Sirio and I went with our wives to the Cirque du Soleil," Tihany recalls. "Sirio's jaw literally dropped."

But Sirio also had three sons—all champing-at-the-bit restaurateurs. And only one restaurant to go around.

In the spring of 1995, Sirio got a phone call from Richard Kotter, the newly installed managing director at the New York Palace hotel. Kotter had won high marks in the hotel industry for resuscitating the empress dowager of luxe hotels, the Waldorf-Astoria. Now Prince Jefri of Brunei, essentially a board member of the world's richest family business, had added the Palace to the string of aging hotels with priceless brand names owned by his family and the country of Brunei: the Beverly Hills, the Hotel Bel-Air, and London's Dorchester. (Last month, the Bruneians bought Paris's Hôtel Plaza Athénée.) They had all received a restorative infusion of Brunei's oil wealth.

Though the crew from Brunei had acquired the hotel in 1993, to most of New York, the very mention of the Palace conjured the hotel world's Agrippina—Leona Helmsley—who ran the place for eleven years. The Palace *was* Leona: an icon of the hubristic, hypertrophied eighties. Along with supervising the rumored $100 million face-lift, Kotter would see to the Palace's sorely needed image-lift.

A few blocks away, the renovated St. Regis Hotel had signed Gray Kunz as executive chef and opened Lespinasse. When Ruth Reichl conferred her first four-star rating on chef Kunz, the St. Regis got a windfall of cachet. The lesson was not lost on Kotter: A great restaurant will always attract the Right Kind of People. And Kotter had a 24-karat carrot: Madison Avenue's turn-of-the-century Villard Houses. Built in 1882 as the home for railroad magnate and bon vivant Henry Villard, the complex was designed by Joseph Morrill Wells of the firm of McKim, Mead & White. Wells, like his boss Stanford White and Villard, was a fast-living gadabout often observed in the company of beautiful women, bohemian artists, and the nouvelle plutocrats of the age. In other words, his crowd was very much like Le Cirque's.

Villard went bankrupt just as his mansion was completed. After a short occupancy, he eventually sold it to Elisabeth Mills Reid, whose family owned the New York *Tribune*. By the thirties, the last Reid had moved out and, after passing into receivership, the residence was repurchased in 1948 by the original—and current—

owners of the land underneath, the Archbishopric of New York. (St. Patrick's Cathedral is just across the street.) When the archbishop's staff outgrew the space, Harry Helmsley leased it, in 1974. The Helmsleys needed the Villard Houses because when they were included in the site plan for the new Helmsley Palace, the courtyard and setback entitled them to pile extra stories on top of the hotel. Almost as an afterthought, the Villard space became a not-so-successful warren of tea and banquet rooms.

The mansion was clearly being underused. The location was ideal, and the space, pure robber-baron. Kotter had the funds of Brunei—within reason, of course—to woo a vaunted restaurateur. After some initial conversations with Wolfgang Puck and Drew Nieporent ("Midtown—*Christ!*" Nieporent later said with a dismissive TriBeCan shudder), Kotter went after Sirio and was a persistent suitor. One deal he proposed included a generous walk-away bundle for Sirio if he simply handed over the name and kept the restaurant open for just 24 hours.

58
Le Cirque
Le Cirque

VIP SERVICE: CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT, HIS HOLINESS WANTED LE CIRQUE TO DELIVER; A POST-WATERGATE LUNCH DATE; WHEN WARHOL WORE A TIE.

But here was the chance to create a legacy for the family with no out-of-pocket risk. The Palace would do the build-out according to Sirio's specifications. (At least, hotel executives promised that would be the case—Prince Jefri's accountants ultimately balked at some of the proposed expenditures.) And there were his three sons to consider. Mario, Marco, and Mauro had all studied at top hotel and restaurant schools and had apprenticed at some of France's most renowned restaurants, including Gerard and Elyane Boyer's Les Creyères in Reims and Roger Vergé's Moulin de Mougins on the French Riviera. The boys all speak English, French, and Italian (and at least one of them could always be counted on to pony up some charm in Russian, Chinese, or German). But the old Le Cirque was clearly too small for the three of them.

HIGH-WIRE ACT: DESIGNER ADAM TIHANY.

Even before Kotter started shopping the Palace, Sirio had decided to open a relatively casual midtown Italian restaurant serving recipes that his wife, Egidiana, had learned from her grandmothers. Adam Tihany, a longtime friend and the interior designer who brought us Bice, La Coupole, Metro, and most recently Jean Georges, was commissioned to give the Maccionis their second restaurant. The theme would, of course, be the circus. In just a year and a half, Osteria Del Circo on West 55th Street had surpassed the profitability of the old Le Cirque.

Still, it is very hard to run a dining room with more than one person acting as The Man. The three brothers weren't exactly tripping over each other, but there were the tensions that arise among siblings. A fortuitous offer from Steve Wynn to build another Circo in the Bellagio in Las Vegas came over the transom. With both the Vegas and Palace deals, Sirio's balance sheet would show three sons on one side and three restaurants on the other.

IF HE'D STAYED ON AT THE MAYfair, Sirio would have had his trio of restaurants. But that relationship was starting to show signs of strain. After 22 years, Sirio felt he was being treated like the aging mistress: He wasn't about to be kicked out of his posh quarters, but the hotel wasn't sending orchids anymore. "The hotel wasn't being properly managed," says Sirio.

He'd also picked up a whiff of change in New York's dining habits. The era of the destination lunch, a phenomenon that had figured greatly in his success, had come to an end. Tighter expense accounts and time pressures on his high-powered clientele made it harder and harder for the moguls to do lunch. When they did, wine and liquor no longer flowed among the seriously StairMastered big shots. His future—and that of his sons—lay downtown, which for Sirio meant midtown, with its concentration of office buildings and big hotels. And as for the Blass-suited wives, five more minutes in the Town Car wouldn't kill them.

Sirio decided to shutter Le Cirque. As soon as the closing was announced, regulars like Ed Koch, Ivana Trump, and Gérard Depardieu booked their farewell meals. On June 29, 1996, Sirio strolled

Top center photograph by Arturo Mari/L'Osservatore Romano Photo Service.

the packed dining room one more time. Champagne frothed into more than 100 glasses. Caviar was heaped on toast points like Häagen-Dazs. Sliced truffles poked out of everything like little blackened doubloons. Sirio moved from table to table. He would begin to speak, but then, his voice catching, he was only able to offer a simple nod or smile.

As the last entrée was cleared, the kitchen brigade marched into the dining room in their white tunics and checked pants. At their head was the departing executive chef, Sylvain Portay. Bearing cases of beer and champagne, they returned to the kitchen, and the desserts filed out. Of course, pastry chef Jacques Torres had prepared crème brûlées: a dessert that Sirio had first encountered in Barcelona and introduced to New York when he opened Le Cirque in 1974.

Back in the kitchen, the soon-to-be-unemployed kitchen workers made their farewells. A woman in chef's attire raised her glass of Veuve Clicquot and delivered a full-throated and exquisite rendition of "Batti Batto O Bel Masseto" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni.* The normally raucous kitchen grew still. By one o'clock that morning, Le Cirque was no more.

Meanwhile, the Palace deal moved ahead, albeit *festina lente.* The parties had agreed to agree, and Tihany set about to acquaint himself with some of the copious restrictions on the site: Given the landmark status of the Villard Houses, Team Tihany was limited to installing furniture and fixtures that could be removed without leaving a trace. Kind of like what happens when the circus comes to town and then moves on.

Oh yes, there was one other condition—no monkeys. Patrons of the old Le Cirque knew and loved Kenneth Stern's delightful murals of monkeys dressed like eighteenth-century French aristocrats having tea, dancing the gavotte, and hunting foxes. (The spider monkey, not the poodle, was the fashionable *ancien régime* pet.) Monkeys clambered on the plates and the ashtrays. For Le Cirque to give up its monkeys for the Palace would be like the Yankees being handed a new stadium with orders to abandon pinstripes. But in the Bruneian cosmology, the monkey has connotations of death and ill fortune. So the murals were relegated to the banquet rooms upstairs, and Tihany got Bernardaud and Villeroy & Boch to produce a new batch of plates with cigar-puffing lions and circus balls.

LIKE PICASSO AND FELLINI—in fact like most Europeans—Sirio loves the circus the way Americans love cowboys. But Sirio didn't want to re-create the tatterdemalion road-show trappings of *La Strada.* He wanted something more sophisticated, more modern.

"Before we knew about the move to the Palace, Sirio and I went with our wives to Cirque du Soleil when it was a tent show down at the Battery," Tihany recalls. "We were speechless. Sirio's jaw literally dropped. 'This is what the circus is all about in my mind. This is what I want,' he said."

A New Age circus inside a Gilded Age mansion? Well, there was nothing particularly sacrosanct about the original Villard design. It was patterned in part after the Thurn and Taxis Palace in Frankfurt, which had been inspired by the Farnese Palace in Rome. Toss in the pre-Raphaelite murals by John La Farge in the Gold Room, flanked by Franco-Greco friezes, and you had a *fin de siècle* palimpsest of a building that was, in Tihany's on-the-money Yiddish, *ungepatch*—a mixed-up jumble. Tihany and Sirio are fond of saying that the task before them was akin to "parking a Ferrari in the courtyard of an eighteenth-century palazzo."

"This design is controversial," Tihany admits. "But the alternative was to stay within the period of the rooms. That would have given us a severe, uptight museum feel. That's not Sirio. Sirio works best when he is feeding off the energy of a tumultuous room."

Tihany's rooms are lushly romantic, borderline Art Deco, and overflowing with just-for-the-hell-of-it whimsy. The chairs in the main dining room incorporate references to clown costumes, with outsize pastel buttons running up their spines. At each table is a pair of one-armed chairs that can be arranged so that couples may hold hands easily. A huge carpet with overlapping circles imitates the play of spotlights in a circus ring. Tihany was given free rein largely because Sirio trusts him. And Sirio's trust counts for a lot. (This is a man who confesses that he occasionally calls over to Circo at 9 A.M. just to make sure that at least one of his sons has reported for work: "If one of them picks up, I have my answer, so I just hang up without saying anything.")

Tihany had already built Circo for the family; it was the Maccionis first experience remodeling a space, an exercise in masochism from which they emerged untraumatized. Furthermore, Adam Tihany,

THE GRILL ROOM'S COLOR SCHEME IS VAGUELY MCDONALD'S (EVEN IF THE FOOD ISN'T).

THE GLITZIEST SHOW ON EARTH (CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT): HELLO, JOAN COLLINS; SINATRA-SPOTTING; PULLING OUT THE STOPS WITH JACKIE O.

as the owner of Remi, is also a restaurateur. Sirio knew that any design from him would take into account the ergonomic requirements of a busy restaurant. If something didn't work, it could be changed. Just like a dish on the menu.

As one of the main deal points with the Palace, Sirio still had his key staff members at Le Cirque on payroll, so he dispatched them to tune up Circo. But Sirio was restive, and it was going to be several months before Le Cirque 2000 would be ready. That's when he came up with the idea of a world tour; he and his entourage would start out in Munich, then go on to Frankfurt, Paris, Montecatini, and finish up in London. It would be a press event as well as a chance for his newly appointed executive chef, Sottha Khunn, and Khunn's newly hired sous-chef, Andrew Carmellini (who had cooked under Gray Kunz at Lespinasse), to work together under combat conditions. It would also be a victory tour for Sirio, returning in triumph to the scenes of those first jobs where he had peeled potatoes, bussed tables, mopped floors. If the world was temporarily unable to come to Le Cirque, Le Cirque would go to the world.

At the Plaza Athénée in Paris, Khunn ebulliently seized the helm of this first-class French kitchen. Though he was born in Cambodia, all of his training had been in classical French kitchens.

Khunn turned out a menu of Le Cirque warhorses at every stop: chilled oyster soup with caviar and lemongrass; baked potato with Hudson Valley foie gras and white truffles; sea bass in crispy potato crust with Barolo sauce. And, of course, there was crème brûlée.

Sirio threw a dinner for friends at the Plaza Athénée's Le Relais bar, the very room where he'd worked as a waiter 40 years before. A gorgeous black woman stood in front of a grand piano and sang torchy standards. Le Relais, bathed in pink and rose tones that flattered the Parisian women in Chanel and Gaultier, felt strangely like the old Le Cirque. As in New York, Sirio lavished charisma on each guest; at the same time, he would manage to bark peremptory commands at his sons: "Why, *Madame Très Importante,* Mr. Zeckendorf told me that you had run into each other in the Dominican Republic at the Polo Club—*Marco!!! Quattordici voglia qual cosa!!!! Marco!*—And he said that your daughter looked as if she had been born on a horse, she rode so beautifully. Why don't you pass by for lunch and let me show our new space in New York?"

"You Italian son of a bitch," Aristotle Onassis fumed, "you gave my seat to Sinatra because he's your *paisan.*"

That was the suave Parisian Sirio. At the next stop, Montecatini, the Tuscan homeboy was on familiar turf. It was in this fashionable spa town (Sirio had been born on its poor outskirts) that he trained in a hotel school shortly after his father was shot by the Fascists at the end of the war. The Le Cirque tour settled in at the Grand Hotel & La Pace, where Sirio worked as a busboy in 1948. The Pace's dimly lit, high-ceilinged corridors, its well-worn but expensive carpets, the photos of Verdi and Puccini, a young Prince Ranier and Grace Kelly, Rose Kennedy and her family, Deborah Kerr, Cesar Romero—tan, smiling, relaxed—all spoke of a time when La Pace was as compulsory a stop on the circuit as St. Barts or Aspen today.

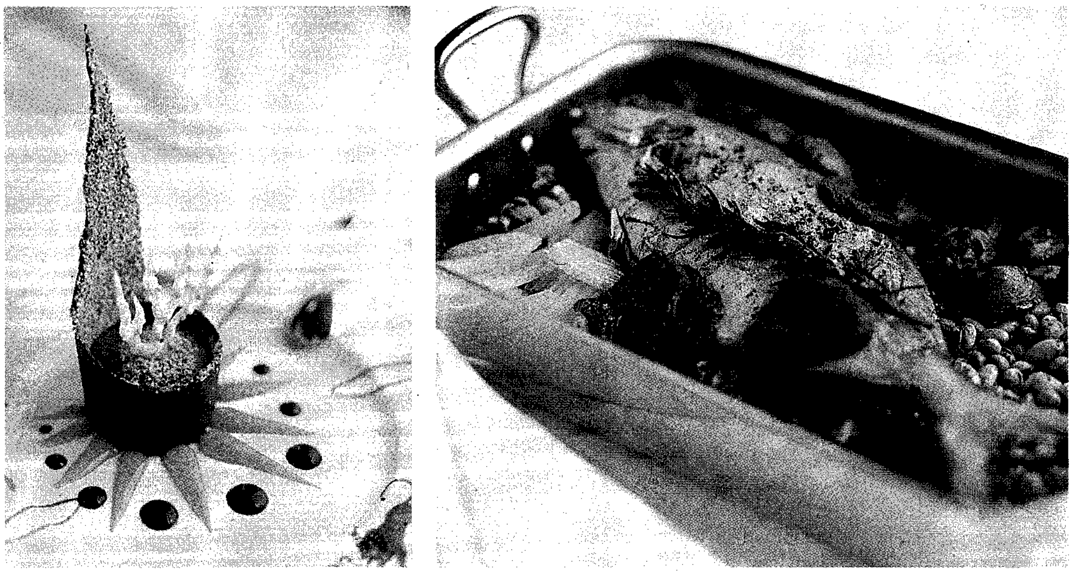
The Pace was the first place where the young Sirio would rub elbows with the super-rich. He had a gift for fitting into their world and an ease of manner, treating every demand as a reasonable one. He knew how to be on call without appearing to hover.

One can't help but note that throughout his career, Sirio has been something of a Zelig—in all the right places at all the right times. When he first departed Montecatini for Paris in 1951, he looked up a fellow townsman, Ivo Livi (known to Parisians and the rest of the world as Yves Montand), who introduced him to Louis Vaudables at Maxim's. Vaudables hired Sirio as an assistant waiter and taught his young acolyte a fail-safe way to pacify patrons who arrived before their table was ready: "Have a glass of champagne at the bar," he would offer expansively. Vaudables also told him that the way to make a restaurant appear successful was to make sure there were no empty tables: If there weren't enough patrons to fill all the tables in the dining room, the wise restaurateur removed the empties.

Between his years in Paris and his arrival in New York in the late fifties, Sirio worked at, among other places, the Hotel Atlantic in Hamburg (a favorite of the Shah of Iran), and the Hotel Principi di Piemonte in Sestriere, a ski resort once favored by the Agnellis. He also was hired by the cruise ships owned by Homeric Lines, whose luxury liners attracted the pre-jet set for a week of partying on an Atlantic crossing. He became a familiar face to the familiar faces. Agnelli, Rockefeller, Harriman, Onassis were all names that appeared in his reservation books as he went from job to job, rising from waiter to captain to maître d'.

In 1956, he touched down in New York, first at Delmonico's, and then, in 1960, at New York's swanky Colony

Club. The untimely death of the maître d' led owner Gino Cavallero to put the confident and good-looking young Maccioni in charge of the dining room. One morning, Sirio realized that the duke and duchess of Windsor, Stavros Niarchos, Cary Grant, Frank Sinatra, and Aristotle Onassis had all requested the same "usual table" in the corner. Sinatra arrived first and was given the table (first come, first served). When the Windsors arrived, they weren't *too* put out to see the Chairman in their place. Cary Grant, true to form, was a gentlemen. Niarchos demanded to talk to Angelo Torino (the former maître d'), and only snapped out of his hissy fit when he was told that Torino was dead and Sirio was now giving out the good seats. But Onassis fumed, "You Italian son of a bitch, you gave my seat to Sinatra because he's your *paisan*." Moral of the story: "You guarantee people a seat, but not a *specific* seat," says Sirio.



A CHOCOLATE TORCHIERE BY PASTRY CHEF JACQUES TORRES; SOTTHA KHUNN'S POMPANO.

IT TOOK 24 YEARS FOR THE SKINNY Tuscan busboy to open his own place on 65th Street, his next stop after the Colony Club. Now he was returning home, in much the same way that a presidential candidate journeys to his birthplace to kick off his campaign.

Khunn and the crew had their work cut out for them. In Paris, Khunn had the resources of a state-of-the-art kitchen. But in Montecatini he arrived in a kitchen with five guys on the crew, a vague promise of reinforcements from the local hotel school, and 250 unplucked ducks. Even more unsettling, a shipment of white truffles, the centerpiece of the upcoming banquet, was missing. What else could go wrong?

The following morning, Alessandro Giuntoli, the executive chef of Circo (and a hometown Montecatini boy), cut his finger badly and was *hors de combat* for much of the day. But this was Italy, where things somehow work out, especially when a meal is involved. Bandaged but unbowed, Giuntoli returned to his stove. The ducks were plucked. The truffles arrived, their minute-by-minute progress plotted by phone calls to every gas station and friend on the road from Urbino to Montecatini. Then, when Jacques Torres discovered that there were no squeeze bottles to be had for his chocolate sauce, Marco Maccioni went to the pharmacy and purchased some brand-new douche kits, which, as it turned out, made fine chocolate dispensers.

The dinner was a black-tie affair attended by all of Italy's biggest gastronomic guns. Of course, it wouldn't have been a by-the-book experience had not Italy's most respected wine writer, Luigi Veronelli, sent back the first bottle of wine that was served to him—a Castellare Canonico that my unrefined taste buds found quite superb.

Triumphant and revitalized, and no doubt a few pounds heavier, the magical Maccioni tour returned to New York ready to kick ass and open the new restaurant in two months—tops.

OF COURSE, SIRIO WAS DREAMING. THIS IS, after all, New York, city of implacable building-trade unions, punitive permit procedures, and Kafkaesque landmarks laws. The actual dining rooms weren't held up that much—since Tihany wasn't allowed to alter the historic interior, most of what would go into the new space was furniture, carpeting, and decoration. All of that work was proceeding in workrooms in Europe and America. But the kitchen, which had to be constructed on-site, was another matter.

Before he made a name for himself designing kitchens, Mark Stech-Novak was himself a chef at his own restaurant, Camarque, in San Francisco. Khunn and Sirio charged him with fashioning a work space that employed nineties technology in a design that more or less approximated the classical design of Prunier's in Paris (the super-traditionalist restaurant where Khunn started out in the seventies). There would be separate stations for grilling, sauces, meats, fish, pasta, and foie gras. The rotisseries would be an industrial version of a device five-star Michelin chef Alain Ducasse had first used in Monaco and then in Paris.

"It's like a French kitchen, true," Stech-Novak commented, "but in Ducasse they turn out a hundred covers a night. Here we have designed in the counter space, the alleys, the fire, to push out twice that. Big difference." "A hundred meals is a dinner party, not a restaurant," Sirio has often said by way of contrasting a high-voltage New York restaurant with a *precieux* French food shrine.

The old Le Cirque seated 118 in close quarters. In the flashy new digs, Le Cirque 2000 will seat 120. Khunn, however, will have a vast kitchen to work in. The sheer square footage and equipment exceeds anything most top chefs have ever experienced.

Many people, upon learning that Khunn is Cambodian, assume that he is a typical fusion chef with a penchant for lemongrass, cilantro, and chile oil. It's true he's Asian by birth and grew up with the tastes of Indochina. But he also comes from a well-born, Francophile family (which was decimated in the turmoil of the past 30 years). After migrating to France in 1974, he apprenticed at Prunier's under Barnagaud Prunier.

Eberhard Müller, the chef at Lutèce, recalls working alongside Khunn at L'Archestrate, Alain Senderens's epochal nouvelle cuisine restaurant in Paris in the seventies. "Of all the junior kitchen staff, Sottha was the most respected. He never made a mistake, and somehow his quiet intensity made us all more focused. The most intriguing thing about Sottha was, although he was not an Asian chef per se, he had a thorough understanding of Oriental spices and herbs. It was no accident that Senderens was the most successful avant-garde chef in terms of using Oriental ingredients: His secret weapon was this Cambodian kid with an infallible palate."

After his stint with Senderens, Khunn continued his training at another seminal restaurant of the past two decades: Les Frères Troisgros. Next, he and Alain Passard (currently the owner-chef of the Michelin-three-star Arpège) opened Duc d'Enghien just outside Paris.

It was there that Daniel Boulud, the chef at New York's Hotel Westbury, first ran across Khunn. The French-born Boulud had just been approached by New York's Plaza Athénée to open Le Régènce. Boulud wanted the job, and he also wanted the best sous-chef in the world. Without a sous-chef, an executive chef is just a guy shouting loud orders and falling hopelessly behind. A friend of his at the United Nations dining room told him about the young Cambodian working outside Paris. Boulud flew there to meet him and had what he reported to be "the best meal of my life," a simple rack of lamb with garlic confit that still brings a smile of reverent contentment to Boulud's lips.

The Villard Houses were clearly being underused. The location was ideal, and the space pure robber-baron.

Boulud prevailed upon Khunn, who spoke hardly any English at the time, to pack up and join him. That was in 1984.

THE MEN IN THE WHITE COATS: JACQUES TORRES WITH SOTTHA KHUNN.

Two years later, Boulud's growing buzz attracted offers from André Soltner and Sirio Maccioni (who was looking to replace his original chef, Alain Sailhac). Boulud decided that he wanted to run his own kitchen at Le Cirque rather than assume the role of Soltner's heir apparent at Lutèce. It was important for Boulud and Khunn that they quickly seal their own reputations. Within months, they created their signature scallop black-tie and paupiette of sea bass with potato and truffles. Boulud says of these dishes—and the ones that followed—"It is hard for me to tell you who thought up what. We were in such harmony that the ideas seemed to come from a space between the two of us." (Let it be noted that I have never heard a famous chef share credit for his famous dishes.)

After six years, Boulud, whose food at Le Cirque earned four stars from the parsimonious Bryan Miller at the *Times*, struck out on his own. Khunn, to the surprise of many, stayed behind.

"Look," Boulud explained, "here was a guy whose family was essentially destroyed by the turmoil in Cambodia. The Maccionis are all about family, and I think Sottha and Sirio adopted one another."

Sirio wanted Khunn to take the helm of Le Cirque, but he demurred. According to Boulud, "French cuisine is a closed club. Sottha always keenly felt that he was a foreigner. Now, America doesn't work that way. But I still think he felt that taking over at Le Cirque was somehow forcing himself into that closed French world where he would never be accepted."

Still, Sirio wanted Khunn to take charge, and barely disguised his feelings when he brought Sylvain Portay in from Ducasse's Louis XV in Monte Carlo. Two years later, Sirio offered Khunn the job again. This time he was ready. "In America, you work as a sous-chef for David Bouley for six months and all of a sudden you set yourself up as a chef. This is not a true chef," says Khunn. "You must train in all the basics, all the classics. You need twenty years to be a real chef. Now I think I am ready."

Sirio is ready, too. He has warmed up for the opening by taking famous clients on walk-throughs of the Palace space. The faithful have all called ahead, and under a tentlike canopy near the entrance, he waits for them. To his right, an enormous mural by Robert Cenedella depicts an imaginary lunch with Richard Nixon, Diana Ross, Liz Smith, Frank Zappa, Robin Leach, Bill Zeckendorf, Dr. John, and Jackie Onassis (to name a handful). All flash the *Mahvelous to see you dahling* grin that Page Six habitués can turn on at will.

Nancy Reagan was trundled around the premises. So were Ron Perelman, Bill Cosby, Henry Kissinger, Betsy Bloomingdale, and Woody Allen. Architect I. M. Pei was invited to comment on the architecture.

"What do you think about the bar in the Gold Room?" Sirio asked.

"Hey, it's a bar. It's supposed to be fun," said the man who planted a glass pyramid in the plaza of the Louvre.

"You know, Mr. Pei," Sirio whispered in confidence (a Sirio secret is something he tells one person at a time, Adam Tihany once remarked), "I am *heartbroken* that I had to tell Fernando Botero that I could not accept his offer of a large nude for our courtyard."

Maccioni explained that the church, which owns the land on which the restaurant sits, didn't literally veto the statue. But a certain monsignor made it very clear that he wasn't thrilled at the idea of a well-fed Amazon mooning St. Patrick's.

"This time, I would like to have a better relationship with my landlord," Sirio deadpanned. "Especially since it happens to be God." ■

Lady Macbeth of Mobile

As the rapacious Regina Giddens in *The Little Foxes*, Stockard Channing treads where Tallulah, Bette, and Liz went famously before. Playwright John Guare finds out why.

STOCKARD CHANNING CALLED ME FROM TEXAS LAST year. She didn't say hello. She said, cryptically, "*Little Foxes.*" I understood her kind of shorthand. Her brain was clicking. I said, "Good idea. How's it going in Texas?" "Fine, fine, it's almost over and I'm thinking *Little Foxes.*"

And now, a year later, Stockard is back in New York at Lincoln Center Theater to do Lillian Hellman's masterwork, in the part Tallulah Bankhead originated onstage in 1939 and Bette Davis played in the 1941 William Wyler film. She's just finished a stint in California as Paul Newman's girlfriend in the new Bob Benton film, *Magic Hour.*

Since the New York *Times* had called Stockard my "muse" because of her appearances at Lincoln Center Theater in *House of Blue Leaves, Six Degrees of Separation,* and *Four Baboons Adoring the Sun,* this magazine thought I should interview her. Which I was happy to do, because I don't see her when she's out of town, which she is a lot; and when she's in rehearsal, she becomes obsessed and you don't get to see her until the play is open. The best thing about working with Stockard is you get to see her all the time.

So this interview was a good opportunity to catch up with her. But where?

"I don't want to have it at my place in the kitchen eating Chinese takeout."

"What's wrong with Chinese takeout?" I ask.

"Nothing, but when I get out of rehearsal, I just want to go home and sit in the kitchen, but I don't want to do an interview there."

I tell her not to worry: "What's an interview but a one-act play? We'll do the interview, and I'll fill in the background."

So we sit in her kitchen and eat Chinese takeout. She's in her jeans and T-shirt, just in from rehearsal.

"In this interview, I think we'll be at Orso," I begin. "You enter. Everyone applauds, whispers, points, cheers! You're very gracious."

"What am I wearing?"

"You tell me."

"The dress I'll wear in *Little Foxes.*"

"Okay. Just don't spill anything on it. You, the muse, sit down with me, your old friend, the muse-ee; the crowds

Hair and makeup by Maria Verel for Art + Commerce.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KEN SHUNG
FOR *NEW YORK*

Bring on the Hellman: John Guare, the amused muse-ee, with pal and sometime muse Stockard Channing on the eve of her debut in *The Little Foxes*.

whisper, *Who's he?* You order Pellegrino and a plate of tastefully steamed vegetables and we begin the interview."

"Sounds okay, pass the lo mein." She opens a beer. I remind her of that phone call last year. Why *Little Foxes*?

"I went to Texas to do *Lily Dale,* a Horton Foote movie, with Sam Shepard and Mary Stuart Masterson. Horton, whom I'd never met, had these understandable qualms about this northern person playing his grandmother. Well, I got down to Texas and this voice came out of me. Horton said, 'What's that voice? Where are you from?' It was a voice so far out of my past."

"What past? Shirley MacLaine past?"

"No, you only know the New York side of me. In *Blue Leaves,* I played my aunt from Queens, and in *Six Degrees,* I was playing your wife, Adele, but the other side of my family, that's the part you don't know. You never knew my father, Lester Napier Stockard, who died when I was 16. He spent time in Pensacola, Florida, in the 1890s, the youngest of nine children. Since I was born when he was 50, his older brothers and sisters were dying of old age by the time I came around. Horton understood all this.

"Playing in *Lily Dale* put me back to that lost part of my childhood. My young mother and my old father would go off on business trips and send my sister Lesly and me down to Pensacola to stay with Aunt Lucy, born in the 1880s, who had raised my father. I was the kind of kid who imitated everybody, the family clown, the storyteller. *Lily Dale* opened up some deep part of me that remembered those voices, and when that film was over, I didn't want to let that go.

"Now, you have to know that Pensacola is just over the border from Mobile, Alabama. I thought of *Little Foxes,* which takes place inland of Mobile. Seeing how they lost it all in the Civil War, money was a big issue in my father's family."

I've only seen the photographs of Tallulah Bankhead in the legendary original production of *The Little Foxes.* I mainly know *The Little Foxes* from the film. A well-worn copy of *Halliwell's Film Guide* leans against Stockard's TV. I thumb past *Little Big Man, Little Caesar, Little Colonel,* to *Little Foxes.* I read the précis to her: " 'A family of schemers in post–Civil War days will stop at nothing to outwit each other. Superb film of a brilliant play.' "

"The play *is* brilliant," Stockard says. "Because of the movie, I thought I knew the play, but the play surprised me. I knew it was about sex and money, but Regina wasn't this villainess out of some outdated melodrama, twirling her mustaches. I loved her gusto, her ability to think on her feet, to turn on a dime. Her turning radius is the most salient thing about her, her pragmatism with all its brutal consequences. I don't want to step aside from her venality or her grossness. She's a woman who wants the one thing she never had—freedom. And her own money. What's the price of that? That's another story. But you don't just want to play a certain role. You want to be part of a world.

"I liked the brutal world of *Little Foxes,* set in this time when America was ready to break open on the world scene. If it was written about today, it'd have to take place in Australia—no, South Africa. A society ready to declare itself. I loved how Lillian Hellman dealt with corruption, in this case, free water power and criminally cheap labor. To see human corruption destroying the fabric of the South. A northern businessman comes down to do business. 'I don't want any strikes,' he says. 'Strikes?' says Regina's brother Ben. 'Why, whatever's that?' Regina's smiling and batting her eyelashes. He's going to pay workers less than $8 a week. Slavery may be dead, but they've found a new way of exploitation. Is Regina a good businesswoman? No, she has no interest in those messy parts of business. Her brothers take care of that. She, however, knows how to make a deal."

"The good old deal," I say. "Not until Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross* is there another play about the poetry of the deal."

"Well, exactly! All Regina wants to do is take her millions to Chicago, get new dresses, and go to Europe. She's in a dead-end relationship, in a backwater town, living in this enormous house where everyone is watching everyone else all the time."

I ask, "What's most American about her?"

"She only wants to win the jackpot. What we do in the name of greed. And her husband is not some goody-goody. Illness made him leave town for five months for treatment, and in that time he got religion. But he's no victim; if she's Lady Macbeth, her husband had been Macbeth."

I don't want to step aside from Regina's venality or grossness. She's a woman who wants the one thing she never had—freedom. And her own money.

We've gone through the Sichuan string beans. She's looking off in the distance, in some rehearsal room in her head.

"I knew Jack O'Brien, who directed me in *Hapgood,* loved the play. We brought it to Lincoln Center. So here it is 1997, 100 years later; I am playing a woman who could've been my grandmother, although I imagine my grandmother was nicer than Regina."

We've finished off the noodles, the sesame chicken, the works. She has an early rehearsal. I'll set the interview in Orso. I'll have her in character eating steak, blood-rare. At the door, I remember that *Little Foxes* has one of my favorite last lines in any play. Regina's daughter asks, "Are you afraid, Mama?" Regina is silent. What does Stockard think Regina is afraid of?

"We've only rehearsed the first two acts. I'm not at the end yet." She bats her eyelashes and smiles. ■

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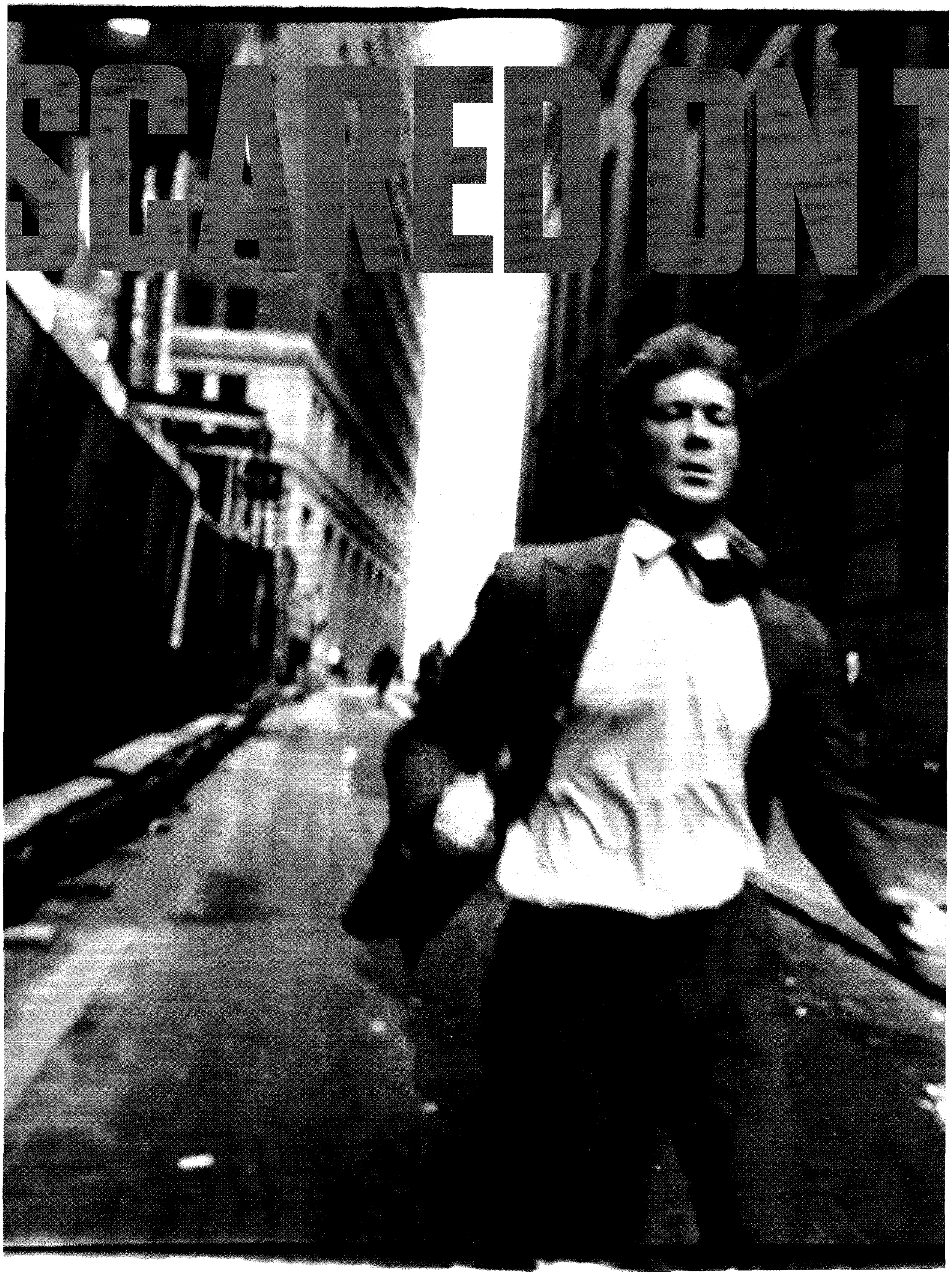
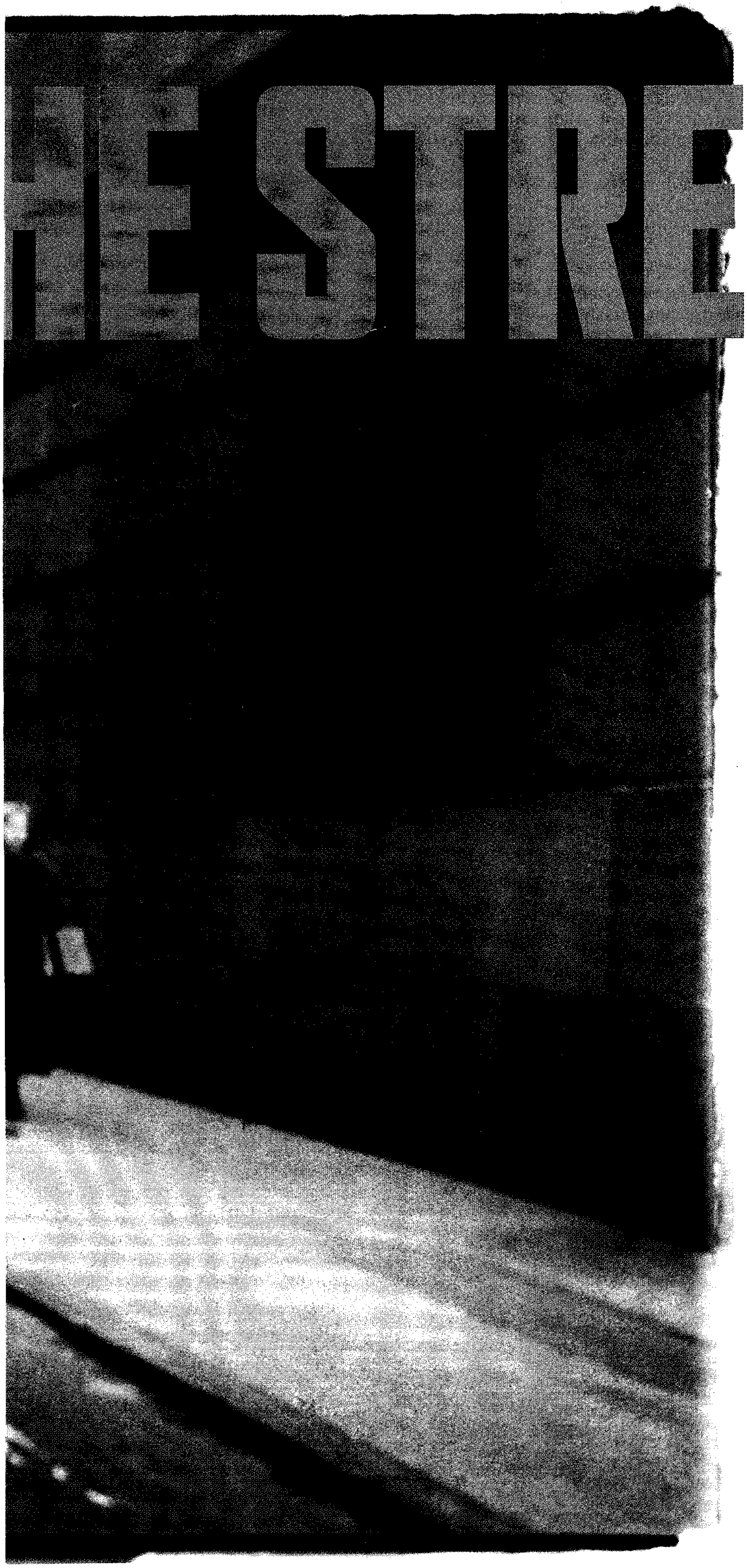




E STREET?

This time around, Wall Street's boom has been our boom. But recent market gyrations have New York wondering, is the party ending just as it was starting to get good?

By Alex Williams

THE CLOSING BELL HAD JUST SOUNDED at the New York Stock Exchange, the carnage finally over. The Dow had been plummeting, 3.5 points per minute in the past hour. In front of the Exchange's stately façade on Broad Street, a crowd was gathering. The crash was already being called Black Monday, and there was a sense that

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL ACKERMAN
FOR NEW YORK

something very potent had just ended.

A skinny man with a bushy mustache began to yell out an inevitable battle cry.

"Down with the M.B.A.'s! It's all over! Down with the yuppies!"

A man in a suit brayed back at him, as if on cue, "He who dies with the most toys wins!"

That was the way it went down last time, October 19, 1987—the crash a final act in a war of ideologies. It wouldn't possibly look like that today.

"Whatever happens, it will be remembered as The People's Stock Market," says James Grant, the fastidious—and slightly impish—editor of *Grant's Interest Rate Advisor*. In six years, the number of Americans owning stocks has doubled, to about 40 percent. On March 11, when the Dow Jones Industrial Average reached a historical high of 7,085, we as a nation had added $4.5 trillion to our household wealth since the Gulf War, thanks to the most dramatic run in stocks since the one that ended September 19, 1929. Investing virtually anywhere has been profitable, even in the market index itself. Anyone who invested $10,000 in the Vanguard Index Trust 500 in 1991 would have $28,718 in that same account today.

This uneasy symbiosis between Wall Street and Main Street has shaped our attitudes toward the boom. The eighties had Trump and Boesky. This time around, in some small way, the Trumps are us. The winnings—and losses—belong to everyone who can make it to the casino. And if there's anxiety, it's spread evenly, even if the wealth isn't.

This is perhaps one reason why the protracted winning streak of the nineties hasn't felt much like a cork-popping blowout. The small-time investor has shown mostly fear in uncertain times. Economists have quizzically noted the absence of the "wealth effect" of late—the customary increase in consumer spending that accompanies stock-market rallies.

Only lately has the city shaken off the dark memories of the Dinkins years and started to feel like a classic boomtown—like New York, that is. Quietly, Wall Street bonuses have skyrocketed, equaling, and even surpassing, those of the pre-crash eighties. "The number of 30-year-olds who make a million or more is just mind-boggling, and the number in that age range making $5 million is probably mind-blowing as well," says one young Wall Street broker.

One reason, perhaps, that the nineties boom *feels* more like a populist boom is a new ethic of discretion. The small investor can savor his $2,000 winnings in the small-caps without being reminded by every book, film, and headline how much the real players are pulling down.

"The eighties were a pretty remarkable time for compensation. But the pay is much higher now," says John Keefe, a former Drexel, Burnham, Lambert analyst who now runs the Keefe Worldwide financial consultancy. "People are just being a little more tactful about talking about it, realizing the outside world is only going to want them to give it away."

Still, at fashionable downtown bistros, a bottle of Château Haut-Brion Bordeaux that sold for $75 two years ago is selling—quite briskly—for $150. The sidewalks leading from Gramercy Tavern to trader hangouts like the Ginger Man on East 36th Street are littered with the butts of Cohibas—the real Cohibas, the Cuban ones that'll cost you $50 a pop.

"People are buying $100 bottles of Bordeaux, $25 glasses of wine, no problem. You didn't see that two years ago. People have money. It's all coming back. We sell 70 cigars a week here, at a cost of $8 to $12 apiece," says Joey Goldman, 25, who runs the three-month-old Wall Street Kitchen and Bar with his father, Tony Goldman. "It's a good sign when Goldman, Sachs calls up, sends 40 people over, and hands me their credit card."

But there's an old saying on Wall Street. Stock-market booms are just like sex—they always feel best just before they end.

FOR FOUR ELECTRIC YEARS FOLLOWING the Reagan recession that ended in 1982, the securities industry spun out brilliantly from the tight orbit it had followed for decades. Suddenly, the three-button suits from J. Press, the oxblood chairs, and the snifters of Armagnac gave way to forms of *nouveau riche* excess that would have made—and did make—the senior managing partners of white-shoe firms cringe. The behavior changed because the money changed. There was a flash flood of money.

Overnight, the frenzy spawned a literature of its own—from Michael Lewis's *Liar's Poker* to Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*. For the first time since the twenties, Wall Street was driving popular culture. It was money as fable, money as fairy tale.

Star writers like James Stewart and Bryan Burrough at the *Wall Street Journal* spawned a new breed of real-life superstars. Their names: Michael Milken, Ivan Boesky, Martin Siegal.

The kids of the nineties took this as a lesson.

"There's *no* benefit in talking to the press," one young mutual-fund analyst says emphatically. "Why would you want to get all this out in the open? There's *only* downside. If you don't have a product you need to sell, why talk to the press and create resentment? The new ethic is, enjoy your money silently and have fun."

"Look at John Gotti," his friend, in bonds, adds. "The mob wanted *him* to get himself in the papers . . ."

But make no mistake—the disparity of wealth is alive and well in New York. Wall Street salaries have shot from $16 billion a year between 1989 and 1991 to more than $21 billion every year since 1992.

The good money has come at a price. If the kids on the Street were spending their eighties windfall as if it were lottery money, they're acting this time as though they had labored for every penny. Competition for those big bucks is fiercer than ever.

A series of shakeouts, mergers, and downsizings followed the 1987 crash. In that period, New York's securities-industry employment shrank from 262,000 jobs in the third quarter of 1987 to a mere 209,000 in the first quarter of 1991. As a result, most shops today remain leaner, and smaller, even if the securities industry as a whole has rebounded.

The old-boy networks in part have given way to strict, even severe, meritocracies. ("It's not even *What did you do for me yesterday?*" says one analyst. "It's

The boys on the bubble, at the Wall Street Kitchen and Bar.

What will you do for me tomorrow?")

"It was never the issue of the star who was getting $5 million. It's never a problem paying Hank Aaron. But in the eighties, it was too many utility infielders getting $1 million," says Ken Lipper, who left Salamon Brothers in 1982 to serve as Ed Koch's deputy mayor for finance and economic development (he now runs a money fund called Lipper & Co.). "Back then, every jerk was going home telling his mother he was a millionaire. But today, companies know they have to produce returns for their stockholders. They know there are going to be bad years. And they are in very severe competition with commercial banks and other enterprises. So there is a much greater sense of vulnerability on Wall Street."

"The people who are still in when it crashes—they're going to be shocked? No, they're just going to be caught with their pants down."

In other words, working until the wee hours is as likely as partying until the wee hours these days.

"It's hard to conspicuously consume if you don't have the time to consume," says Harry DeMott, a vice-president at Crédit Suisse First Boston. A leaner staff means more work for everybody. Says DeMott, "I go into the office on a Saturday, it's four-fifths full."

It's too reductively Freudian to speculate that this new vulnerability has led to a nesting instinct. Regardless, the public temples of excess from the eighties (Area, the Palladium) have given way to private, catered ones. "Home" has taken new relevance to the new, if not *nouveau,* rich. Accordingly, housing values continue to soar (25 percent between 1990 and 1995). Of course, tastes are a bit different this time around.

"It still reverberates, how gaudy and horrible the eighties were," says developer Bruce Menin, whose company, Crescent Heights, is converting the former skyscraper home of PaineWebber, across from the Stock Exchange. Already, more than 1,000 applicants are vying for 345 units. "Nowadays, there are still those jerks who go out and buy a Ferrari with their bonus check. But a car is a car. People define themselves now by their home. They see themselves in spacious, tasteful, fine apartments with warm earth tones. It's just a different way to define yourself. They're looking for quality, historical properties and so forth," Menin says. He pauses.

"It still costs money, of course."

IT'S THURSDAY, AROUND 5:30 P.M., AT THE teeming Wall Street Kitchen and Bar, down the street from the New York Stock Exchange. Although the Dow Jones Industrial Average has plummeted about 8 percent in the past week, there's no sign of the warfare that has ensued. The place is packed; the obscure German pilsners are flowing; traders and brokers are sharing their usual cocky, adrenalized banter.

One young broker, however, pauses from talk about tennis to reflect on the virtual free fall in stock prices. He was on the floor of the Exchange on March 27, when reports about overheating economic growth sparked inflation fears and a quick panic. "All of a sudden, nobody was buying. Everyone was selling," the broker says. "It dropped like 50 points in fifteen minutes. You could *feel* the phones ringing. You could *feel* the molecules bouncing against the walls. I was wondering myself, 'Holy shit—is this it?' "

For a year, maybe two, maybe more, the country has waited anxiously for a "healthy correction," some sign of reality to temper an improbably historic winning streak. Was this it? Or was this instead a prelude to the Great Crash of '97?

One trader who is too young to have suffered the recent downturns is still talking about the next one like it's a foregone conclusion: "It's gonna be different from the crash of '87, because people have been waiting for it for a year and a half. By now, it's like, *When is it going to happen*? People have been bracing themselves for it. But if you are really afraid of it, you would have gotten out by now. The people who are still in it—they're going to be shocked? No, they're just going to get caught with their pants down."

Ironically, the bubble has grown so fat off the many small investors who are dumping their savings into the market simply to offset fears of retirement in a post–Social Security era. In other words, when Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan uttered his now-exhausted rhetorical question about possible "irrational exuberance" among stock speculators, he may or may not have been showing a keen sense of the financial markets. But he certainly was demonstrating his tin ear for cultural analysis. The little guys of late are anything but "exuberant." The financial press, after all, has been talking disaster since the Dow hit 3,500. This bull, as another old saying goes, has most certainly been climbing a wall of worry.

"It's hard to conspicuously consume when you don't have time to consume," says one vice-president at Crédit Suisse First Boston.

Of course, those waiting for another Black Monday, or Black Tuesday, might be surprised at the various manners in which money might evaporate should this boom cycle end. What seems like a "healthy correction" can become a slow-motion crash. "People think there have only been two crashes, 1929 and 1987. But certainly, at the time, the media portrayed 1962 as a crash, because the market fell 20 percent in three months. The washout after the go-go era of the sixties unfolded over eighteen months. The losses in many sectors were starting to rival what investors had experienced in 1929," says James Stack, a noted bear over the past two years and editor of the *InvesTech Market Analyst* newsletter, based in Whitefish, Montana.

One wonders how many Black Mondays we might have seen without the curbs on "program trading," where computers buy or sell stock, often increasing volatility in the market. Program trading was widely implicated in the '87 plummet, before the curbs had been devised. On that day, the Dow at one point fell 150 points in 30 minutes. This year, the computers' "circuit breakers," which kick in when the market jumps 50 points in either direction, have already been in effect 54 days.

And even the slide we've already seen has been bloodier than the many headlines would have it. For many, the losses have been greater than those captured by the major indexes. Each index by which we track the market has been buoyed by the strong performance of a couple of massive key stocks that can skew the index. The average stock in the Standard & Poor's 500, for instance, is down almost 16 percent, even though the S&P average was down around 7 percent at its recent bottom. Some shares in sectors like technology, oil, and health care have plummeted up to 40 percent. For born skeptics, it's easy to see a coming crash like an earthquake, in which the tremors start out on the frontier—small stocks, tech stocks—and then start rippling into town, where the giants like IBM are found.

IT'S A MEASURE OF JUST HOW GOOD times have been in New York that we talk so little about the very bad times, which are only as far back in history as Scud missiles. The current bull market began in the winter of 1991, only months after the city had reached a psychic nadir. Just six years ago, New Yorkers with a taste for melodrama were actually using the term *depression.* Housing prices had dropped 20 percent in two years, and that was when condos and co-ops sold at all—sales volume had dropped nearly 40 percent in the same period. Ed Koch was talking about how he couldn't go to a dinner party without everyone telling him they wanted to leave New York.

But even last month, 4,000 people spent a day in line to apply for 700 low-level jobs at the refurbished Roosevelt Hotel in midtown. In fact, the precarious state of the city economy, and cyclical Wall Street's dangerously huge role in it, is of such concern that the nonprofit Regional Plan Association held a luncheon last Tuesday at the New York Sheraton to discuss whether "A Wall Street Tremor Will Send Our Economy Crashing Down Around Us."

"[A correction now] could be a replay of the late eighties and early nineties. You had a big falloff in employment in the securities industry, and it rippled throughout the region," says Robert Yaro, the association's executive director. "The city's tax base is overly dependent on the financial-services industry. The city got an $800 million windfall this year essentially because of bonuses and trading volumes on Wall Street, but even if the economy continues to fly high, we still have something like a $1.5 billion structural deficit for next year, and it rises to 2 or 3 billion over the next few years."

Yaro adds that a major correction could strike New Yorkers—and many Americans—at a more immediate level.

"We've had a generation of people investing in [equity] I.R.A.'s and retirement accounts of various sorts who are going to be quite shocked when this happens. We haven't had an adjustment in years."

"I spoke to a trader today who was telling me he was very concerned because his parents' financial adviser has them 100 percent in stocks, and they're very near retirement age," says one young broker. "Even my father started investing in stocks pretty recently. He had been Mr. Bond all his life. I told him I was concerned. But it's like a drug."

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, AT 5:30, AND THE DOW IS actually up another 49 points, though it has lost 215 points on the week. But whether the nineties boom has already

Then-Exchange chief John Phelan tours the floor the day after Black Monday.

ended, is about to end, or will never end, the guys from the Street in the Tap Room of the New York Athletic Club, two floors above Central Park South, still feel good tonight.

Just this morning, the *Wall Street Journal* was full of gloomy references to "slumps," "tumbling markets," and "nasty surprises," talk of diversifying out of stocks into bonds, and of the best ways to survive bear markets. Even bonds were getting hammered, as rising interest rates ate away at many fixed-income portfolios. But to these young pros, it might just be a bottom, an opportunity to buy cheap. They are not about to give up on their party. Not yet. After all, the direction of the markets when trading starts again on Monday is unknowable. And what these guys do know is the bull run of the nineties, and that until now, at least, the money has been good again. Very good. And good money makes for good stories on Wall Street.

"This guy I know at work—25-year-old—he goes to Monte Carlo for vacation," says Trader No. 1, a robust 29-year-old with a chest like a beer keg. "The next day, every credit-card company is calling the office. 'Are you sure he hasn't lost his credit cards?' they're asking me. 'He's on vacation,' we tell them. 'But he's taking out $2,000 every twelve hours,' they say. 'He's having a bit of bad luck. What can I say?' " Trader No. 1 shrugs.

Everyone laughs. Only a few days ago, when the Dow was down 215 points, Trader No. 1 was contemplating doomsday.

"It's going to cause a recession, that's what it's going to do," he coolly predicted that day. Since then, however, things have stabilized—slightly. He's just as cool in revising his projection.

"That was it," he says now, in the tones of an anesthetized patient who can't believe the dentist has already *pulled* the troublesome tooth. "That was the correction."

"Who knows where the market's going to go?" Analyst No. 1, seated across the crude oak table, blithely asks. He shrugs. "People aren't worried about it long-term."

"If you're out in the trenches, this is one of the most exciting times in history," says Analyst No. 2.

Across the table, Trader No. 2 is so market-tested and icy, he'll practically invoke a crash.

"People are getting paid too much," Trader No. 2 says with a shrug. "A friend of mine, he's 34. He just bought a $1 million co-op on Park Avenue. He closed on it two months ago. He's already got a bid a hundred grand higher than what he paid for it. Even he said, 'This is silly.' Basically, what we need is a huge stock market sell-off to bankrupt a few people."

Of course, the traders and analysts pausing over a beer tonight are under 30. The elders of the Street (those who have not burned out or retired to start a hedge fund) keep counseling them about the inevitable market cycles, the coming downturns. But for these young lions, even the crash of 1987 is prehistory.

The young, after all, have had an unusually huge role in shaping this boom. Twenty-seven-year-old managers of multi-billion-dollar mutual funds have the power to move markets, to make or break individual stocks. There is a whole class of young M.B.A.'s who share an almost religious belief that the economy has shifted into a "New Paradigm" era: Communism around the world is dead, American productivity and corporate profits will reign supreme, and the market cycle—and its inevitable, massive downturns—is a snarling beast that has at long last been tamed.

Like 12-year-olds teaching their dads the tricks of the Nintendo set, the new breed on Wall Street consider themselves the masters of the new games, the latest techniques.

"Back in the sixties, the amount of information you get in a year, we get in a day," Analyst No. 2 says. "You've got these old guys out there saying, 'Oh, the market's way too high.' But they're not out there digging, spending their time on the road. I think it's a fabrication, because they're not out there doing it."

Trader No. 1 adds, "These are the same guys who don't know how to turn on their computer."

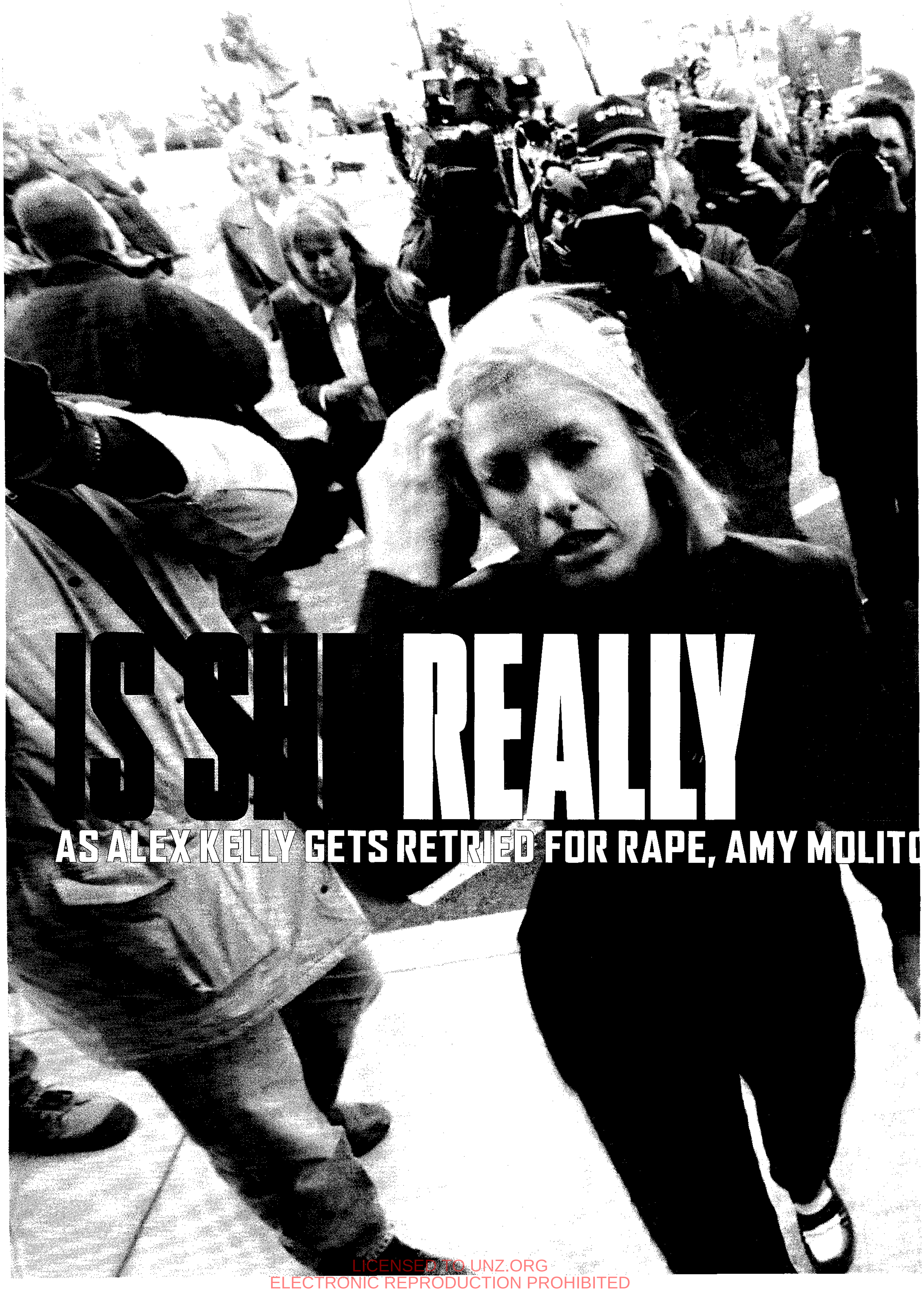
Another round is ordered. A new member, Banker No. 1, joins the party, late. The talk swings over to the de rigueur discussions of the new ethics on the street ("Enjoy your money and don't talk about it," offers Analyst No. 1). Banker No. 1 stabs at a handy metaphor for the downsized, sober nineties. He swings open the jacket of his poplin suit to show off a retail-store label.

"The eighties were Savile Row," he says, in tones of mock profundity. "The nineties are Joseph Bank."

He shrugs. He smirks.

"Yesterday, it was Armani." ▬

Photograph by Andrew Popper.



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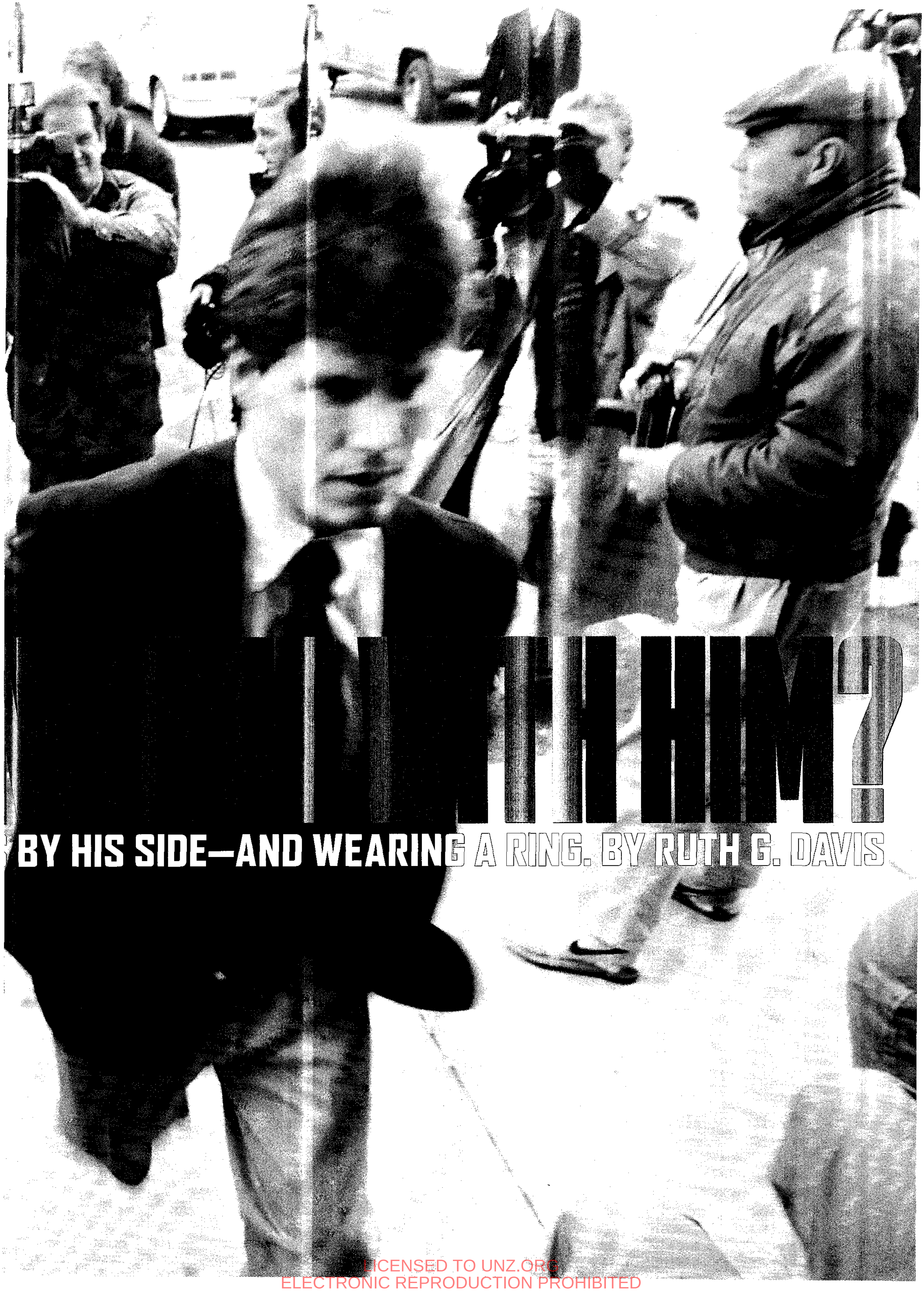
AS ALEX KELLY GETS RETRIED FOR RAPE, AMY MOLITO



TH HIM?

BY HIS SIDE—AND WEARING A RING. BY RUTH G. DAVIS

ALEX KELLY AND AMY MOLITOR WERE A HOT item, an all but inseparable high-school couple, when he borrowed her parents' car and had sex with two other girls in it—whether they consented has yet to be determined by the courts. Shortly thereafter, he went away for eight years to avoid standing trial on two counts of rape, but when he finally returned to Connecticut to face the charges, Alex and Amy got back together. She even let him use her car again, this time with her in it. When the police clocked him speeding and gave chase, he crashed the car—then fled on foot into the woods, leaving her on the pavement with broken ribs and a smashed-up head.

Alex Kelly, one might conclude, is not exactly ideal boyfriend material. But could anyone ask for more from a girlfriend than he has gotten from Amy Molitor?

All last fall, when Alex was being tried on the first of two rape charges, Amy accompanied him to court. She also testified in his defense, describing her relationship with Kelly at the time of the alleged rapes as “serious and intimate.” She was a precise counterbalance to Kelly's accuser, her presence a clear sign that he was not a complete monster. The jury could not come to an agreement, and a mistrial was declared.

Last week, jury selection began for a retrial and Amy was still by Alex's side, standing behind him as he went through the metal detector, straightening his tie in the courtroom, sharing a roll of Mentos during a break on a couch outside, Kelly's arm around her shoulder, her hand on his knee, as if they were an ordinary couple on a movie date.

HAPPY DAYS: At Darien High, Alex was “a sick wrestler, a sick football player,” and Amy was his omnipresent girlfriend.

“GEE, IF HE’S GOT AN ATTRACTIVE GIRLFRIEND, W

And that has most observers thinking that either there's something extremely wrong with Amy Molitor or she's an extremely good actress enlisted by the Kelly defense team. “Women present in support of the accused rapist, a mother, a sister, but especially a girlfriend/wife kind of role, send a message to the jurors,” says Linda Fairstein, sex-crimes prosecutor in the Manhattan district attorney's office. “People tend to make the connection, ‘Gee, if he's got an attractive girlfriend like that, why would he need to force women to have sex?’ ”

The extent to which Amy Molitor may have influenced the outcome of the first trial is hard to gauge. Who knows whether the two out of six jurors who voted to acquit did so because they thought there wasn't enough evidence, or had a hard time with the concept of acquaintance rape, or were sympathetic to Kelly?

But even Thomas Puccio, Kelly's defense lawyer, agrees that Amy's presence was an asset. “I think it's always helpful to have the parents there, the relatives and friends. It's always positive, but I don't think it plays any major role in the outcome of the trial,” he says. (Puccio's attractive wife, Kathy, also regularly appears in court, filling the third position of the blonde phalanx in the front row that includes Molitor and Kelly's mother, Melanie.) As for Molitor's motivations, Puccio is adamant about their purity: “I think essentially what it is, is she's devoted to him, period. She was there at the first trial, not at my request, but totally because she wanted to be there.”

There is certainly something that seems staged about their relationship: the highly visible displays of affection, the way Alex and Amy grab each other's hands as soon as the cameras start clicking. And in some ways, Amy's devotion to Alex would make more sense if she *did* have some private and selfish motive. But according to people who know Amy, that interpretation may just be the projection of a community that can't understand her attachment to Alex Kelly. “People around Darien like to say Amy stays with him just to get the publicity,” says someone who has met them several times. “But I didn't see that at all. I think she just really loves the guy.”

“WE MET IN BASKIN ROBBINS,” AMY TOLD THE JURY last fall. It was 1983, a full three years before two women would accuse Alex of rape. Amy was in eighth grade and Alex, two years older than she, was already distinguishing himself as a star athlete. They began dating while at Darien High School, where a sign hanging on the tennis courts says WARNING: NO GOLFING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS. “They were the kind of couple that was always together,” says a classmate. “I'm not kidding, man—they were *always* together.”

The term *preppy* has been affixed to the whole Kelly affair, but that adjective more accurately describes the place than it does Kelly and Molitor personally. Like Robert Chambers, Alex Kelly is something of a preppy understudy. The Kelly family has money—enough to help bankroll the eight years Alex spent in Europe as a fugitive—but Alex's father, Joe Kelly, got his start in the plumbing business, not like the stockbrokers and corporate executives typical of the Fairfield County suburbs. Amy's father worked for a textile company; her parents now live in Vermont, where her mother's family runs an inn near Mount Snow.

And while Alex and Amy weren't outsiders in high school, they weren't exactly model students either. Page after page of the Darien yearbook is filled with honors societies and student-leadership councils—the stuff overachievers pad their college applications with. Except for the field-hockey team, Amy appears in none of them. “I don't think she was that kind of a student,” says Darien High School administrator

Photographs: previous page, Chris Maynard; this page, Najlah Feanny/Saba.

Judy Betty with just a touch of condescension.

"Amy was a big partyer; she was definitely part of the fast crowd," says someone who was in Alex's class. As for Alex, "everyone knew he was a psycho. He was a sick wrestler; he was a sick football player. He played noseguard, and he was way too small for that position, but I guess he was so strong he could play it." Alex did his share of extracurricular activities, but they were not the kind pictured in yearbooks. By the time he was a junior, Alex was burglarizing houses with his friends. He also spent four months in a drug-rehabilitation program. Then one day in February 1986, during his senior year, Alex drove Amy and her mother to the airport in the Molitors' white Jeep Wagoneer. The next night, while he had use of the Molitors' car, he drove a 16-year-old girl home from a party and allegedly raped her in the backseat. Four nights later, a different girl, another rape charge. "Did you continue to see him and date him after that time?" Thomas Puccio asked Amy Molitor in court last year. "Yes," Amy replied.

Alex Kelly fled the country in February 1987, just days before he was to go on trial for both rape charges. Amy Molitor graduated from high school that June and went to the University of Tampa, where she majored in physical education, specializing in adult fitness. "She was a pretty good student, a B student, pretty much was always one who did her projects and did a good job with them," says Dr. Eric Vlahov, the chairman of the department. "She was a real spunky person, real sweet, energetic, somebody I thought could really go places if the right things happened and things fell into place."

Amy stayed in Florida for a few years, living first in Vero Beach and then in Miami, and she worked as an athletic trainer. In 1996, she moved to New York to live with her younger brother Tyler on East 67th Street and started working as a bartender at Iggy's on Second Avenue, a dark post-college hangout with $2 woo-woo shots and a pool table in the back. "She was great, pretty, very level-headed, as far as I was concerned, very strong-willed and independent. I loved her," says a woman who worked with her. "She was a really good pool player. A lot of people would come in and say, 'Hey, are you the pool shark?' "

'OULD HE NEED TO FORCE WOMEN TO HAVE SEX?"

By this time, Alex Kelly had been brought back to the U.S., accompanied by a blonde Swede named Elsabet Jansson, who was often described as his "fiancée." Elsabet began wearing an engagement ring—and so did Alex. Elsabet appeared on ABC's *Turning Point,* where she was asked why she had no doubts that Alex was innocent. "Because I love him. And he loves me. And we have a life together," she said. Not for long. Sometime late last spring, Elsabet Jansson went back to Sweden, and she has declined to comment about Alex.

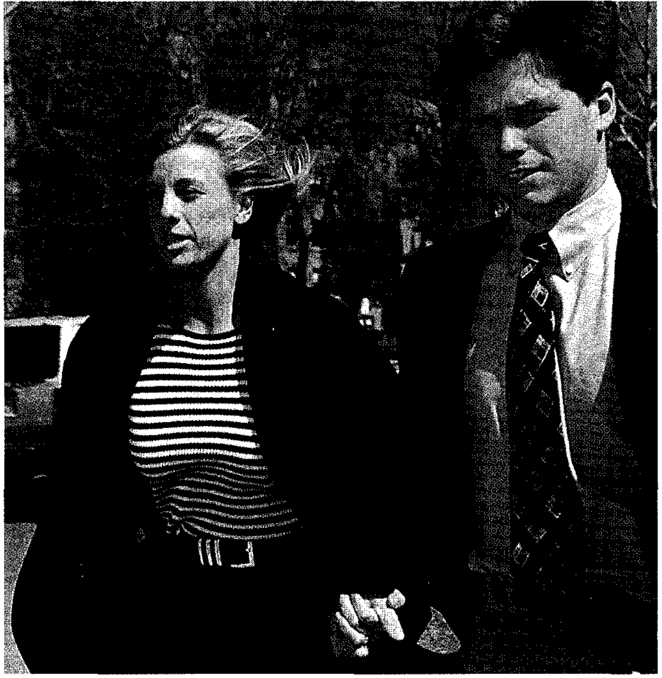
Amy had been seeing somebody seriously as well, a long-term boyfriend from Florida who would visit her in New York. "She was thinking about getting married, but then she decided she wasn't ready," says a co-worker and friend. "At that point, Alex had come back. You know, she was madly in love with him when she was 17 and then he went away all those years. Maybe in her head it wasn't over." That spring—about the same time Jansson left the country—Amy Molitor broke up with her boyfriend and moved back to Connecticut. "Everyone was in shock that she had broken up with him because everybody thought he was so amazing," says her friend. "The month before the trial started, she told me that was the month she was supposed to get engaged to him. They had broken up before that, but that was going to be when they did the ring or whatever."

All summer long, while Alex was free on $1 million bail, he and Amy were seen together in Bell Island, a tiny oceanfront community in Rowayton, Connecticut, where Amy was living with a friend. Alex would come by on a red Harley-Davidson, which he taught Amy how to ride, and they would both go swimming at South Beach, Amy in a bikini and Alex with an electronic monitor strapped on his ankle. "They'd just hang out on the beach and sit in beach chairs. She'd always have a beer in her hand. Basically, they're kind of like a hard-drinking crowd. They were two pretty happy campers together over the summer," says one resident. "The amazing thing about Alex Kelly to me was that this guy did not express that he had a worry in the world. Nothing was wrong, nothing—in fact, not only was nothing wrong but this guy was on the top of the world."

People who have seen them together say the dynamic of the relationship seems genuine. "When he's with her, he's really sweet to her, like you can tell he cares, but I also think he can pour it on. He's a charmer, not like, 'Oh, my God, he's so good-looking,' but he's got an amazing smile and his eyes light up and you definitely get drawn into his scene," says another Rowayton resident. "I know she loves him."

But why? What would account for such devotion? "Somebody who's a rapist is a sadist, so what we're talking about here is sadomasochism," says Joyce Bockar, a psychiatrist in Stamford, commenting generally about why a woman would be attracted to an accused rapist. "He is a very attractive, alluring figure for her." In other words, passion be damned, Amy Molitor has a serious bad-boy complex and should get herself into therapy immediately. "There are a lot of women in this world who are attracted to power, to male power, because they don't think they have any as women so they hitch on, or camp-follow," Bockar continues. "That's what these women are, basically—they're camp followers." This doesn't quite fit with what Amy's friends say about her, but it does elaborate on the generally held opinion that Amy must be a glutton for punishment.

Soon, the summer idyll began to sour. On July 19, Alex, Amy, and a few friends were drinking at Jimmy's Seaside in Stamford,

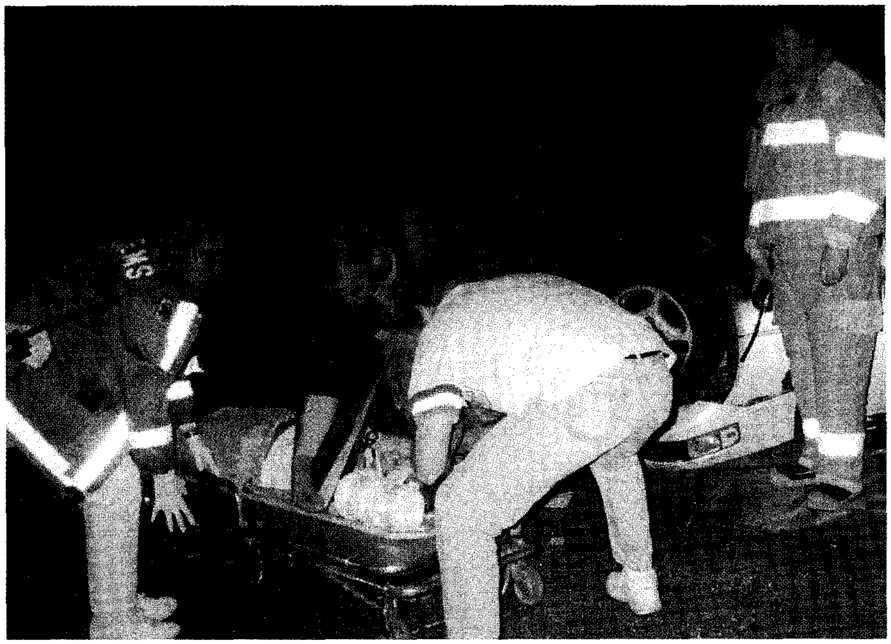


WHAT A WONDERFUL LIFE: The young couple on their daily trek from the parking lot to the courtroom.

Photograph by Najlah Feanny/Saba.

and Alex approached three women who were playing pool. According to a police report, Kelly, angered by a chilly reception, said to one of the women, "You better take that fuckin' stick and use it, because it's the only stick that you'll ever get." The evening ended with Alex pounding his head against the seat of a police car while Amy told a bystander, "He didn't do anything wrong, he didn't do anything wrong!" Kelly was charged with disorderly conduct and interfering with an officer. Then in September, Alex and Amy were driving home from a barbecue in Amy's white Nissan when a police car noticed them speeding. Alex, apparently panicking, tried to lose the cops. In the ensuing chase, he flipped the car, then left the scene and ran home. Amy was taken to the hospital and treated for five broken ribs and lacerations on her scalp.

"People were blown away," says a Rowayton resident. "A lot of people around town wanted to give him the benefit of the doubt because he was so nice to everyone, and then when he flipped the car, people were like, 'He's a fucking schmuck. We don't want to talk to that guy. We don't want to see him.' "



ACCIDENTS HAPPEN: **Last summer, after the police clocked him speeding, Alex flipped the car, then fled the scene, leaving Amy injured on the pavement.**

Back at Iggy's on Second Avenue, Amy's old co-workers and customers couldn't believe the news: "We were all reading the papers and thinking, 'Are we sure this is the same Amy? Could this be somebody with the same name?' Talk about love being strong. Wow, that love is strong there."

Alex's first trial was only a few weeks away. He came to visit Amy in the hospital, and a Rowayton resident who saw Amy after the accident recalls that Amy said that Alex had to leave her at the scene in order to make his 9 P.M. curfew, and that he knew she would be okay because the police were right after them. "She never said anything negative about him, nothing, never—she's right behind him," the friend says.

AND SO SHE WAS, ARRIVING AT THE COURTHOUSE WITH Alex in the plain but stylish outfits of a young professional and carrying a brown leather attaché. "I remember people saying to me, 'She never opens it up,' " jokes someone who attended the trial. Her testimony was simple and brief, making the point that Alex would have had to use two hands to put down the backseat of her parents' car and therefore could not possibly have restrained his accuser. (This would emerge as one of the key issues for the defense.) Her presence prompted lots of nasty comments from observers and the press. Amazingly, the presiding judge even let out a snipe, reportedly telling the jurors, "We call her Amelia Airhead." That judge has since quit the case.

Rumors about Amy have been piling up ever since: that she has a husband down in Florida (there's no record of her having been married in Florida or Vermont); that *Playboy* wants her to pose for the magazine ("We don't discuss anything until it happens," says a *Playboy* P.R. person); that she has a big book contract. Another theory has it that she's being paid off, a practice that is not entirely unheard of. "I've certainly had cases where people have been paid to do it," says Linda Fairstein. "Somebody close to the defendant says, 'You've got to do this for him, you've got to be here for this and we'll owe you.' "

But everyone who's looking for an ulterior motive may be looking at the wrong person. "It's probably not atypical, what she is doing, if in fact she is his girlfriend," says Carla Gisolfi, the executive director of the Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Center in Stamford, which has been monitoring the case. "We can assume that she is, from behavior and language; that she cares deeply for him and vice versa, and she's acting as a support person as would probably anyone else in that situation."

As the retrial gets under way, the Kelly family has drawn a tight net around Amy, who now seems to be living with the Kellys, or at least spends the night there frequently. At the Stamford courthouse recently, Alex swooped down on Amy as *New York* tried to ask her questions. "I can handle it," she said to Alex. "We don't have anything to say to this person," Alex said as he drew her away. "I'm sorry," Amy said from over her shoulder, and she genuinely seemed so.

Amy's family and friends are equally tight-lipped. "I don't discuss it with her too much," her brother Tyler says when asked how he feels about Amy's allegiance to Alex. Petra Roberts, an interior decorator whom Amy stayed with in Rowayton last summer, would say only, "It would be nice if someone wrote a nice story about them for once, because they're really darling together."

Meanwhile, Darien's tolerance for the Kellys is growing thin. "Apparently some real-estate brokers say that property values have suffered a bit, because of the national attention it's gotten," says one resident. "This has freaked people out in Darien." After the last trial, Amy told a friend she believes Alex's chances of getting off are good, but she must really believe it now. Two weeks ago, she began wearing a diamond band on her ring finger: Amy and Alex are engaged, just in time for the retrial. A future move to Europe is likely—if, of course, Alex isn't in prison.

For the moment, Kelly seems to have it made. He returns from his eight-year stint as a fugitive with a fiancée in tow, and when that falls apart, he finds a better replacement, who stands by him in the first trial at the expense of her livelihood, privacy, and reputation and now seems prepared to repeat the ordeal. And this is still just the first rape charge.

"I saw her after the first trial was over," says a friend in New York. "I said, 'How are you?' and she said, 'I'm fine.' I said, 'You know, I'm seeing you a lot on TV,' and she said, 'Oh, yeah, I know,' and I said, 'Are you working?' and she said not right now because people were bothering her at work, but she was going to be starting again at a restaurant in Darien.

"And I said, 'Well, are you happy?' and she said, 'Very.' " ▬

Photograph by George Brooks/The Darien *Times*.

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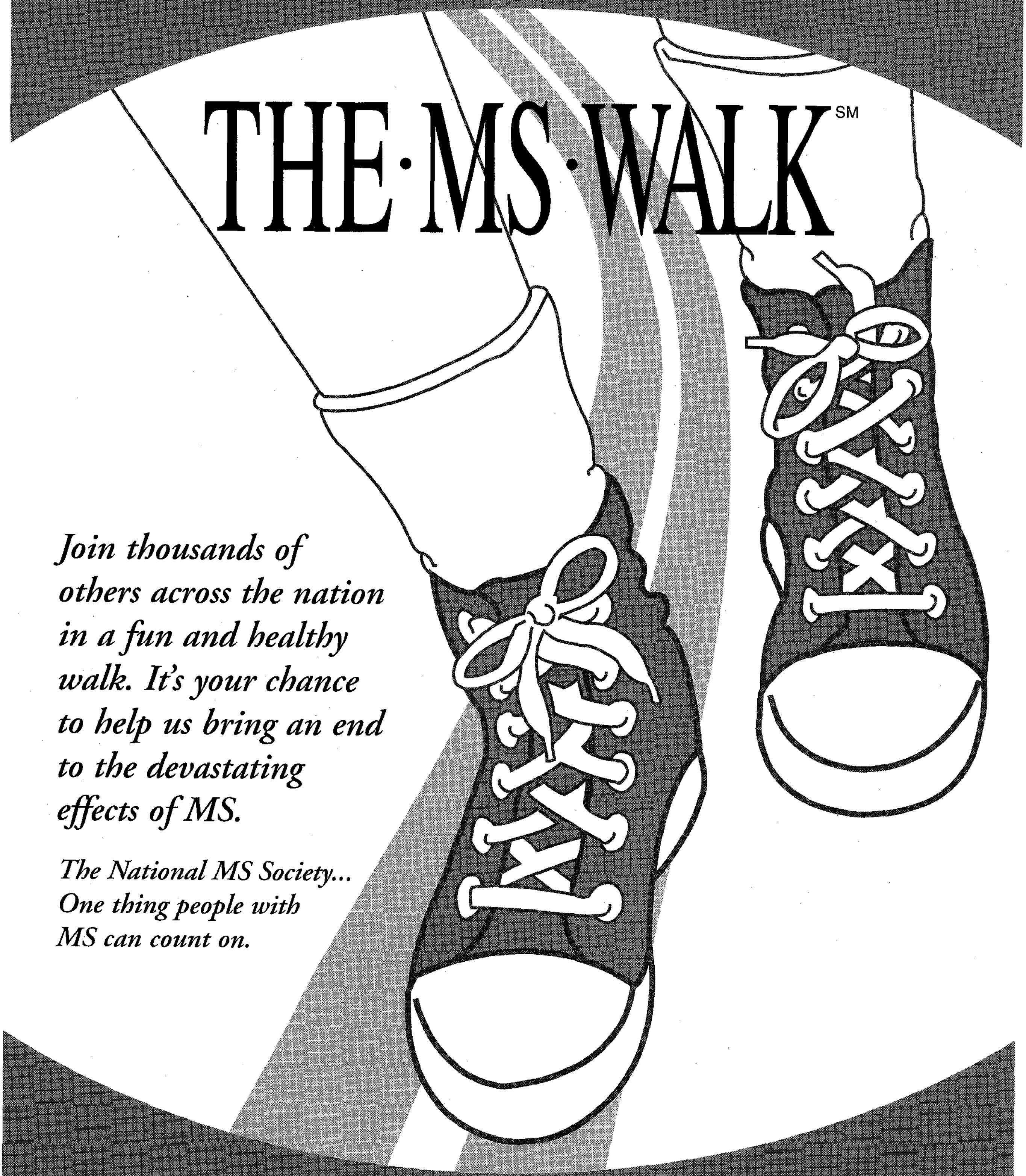

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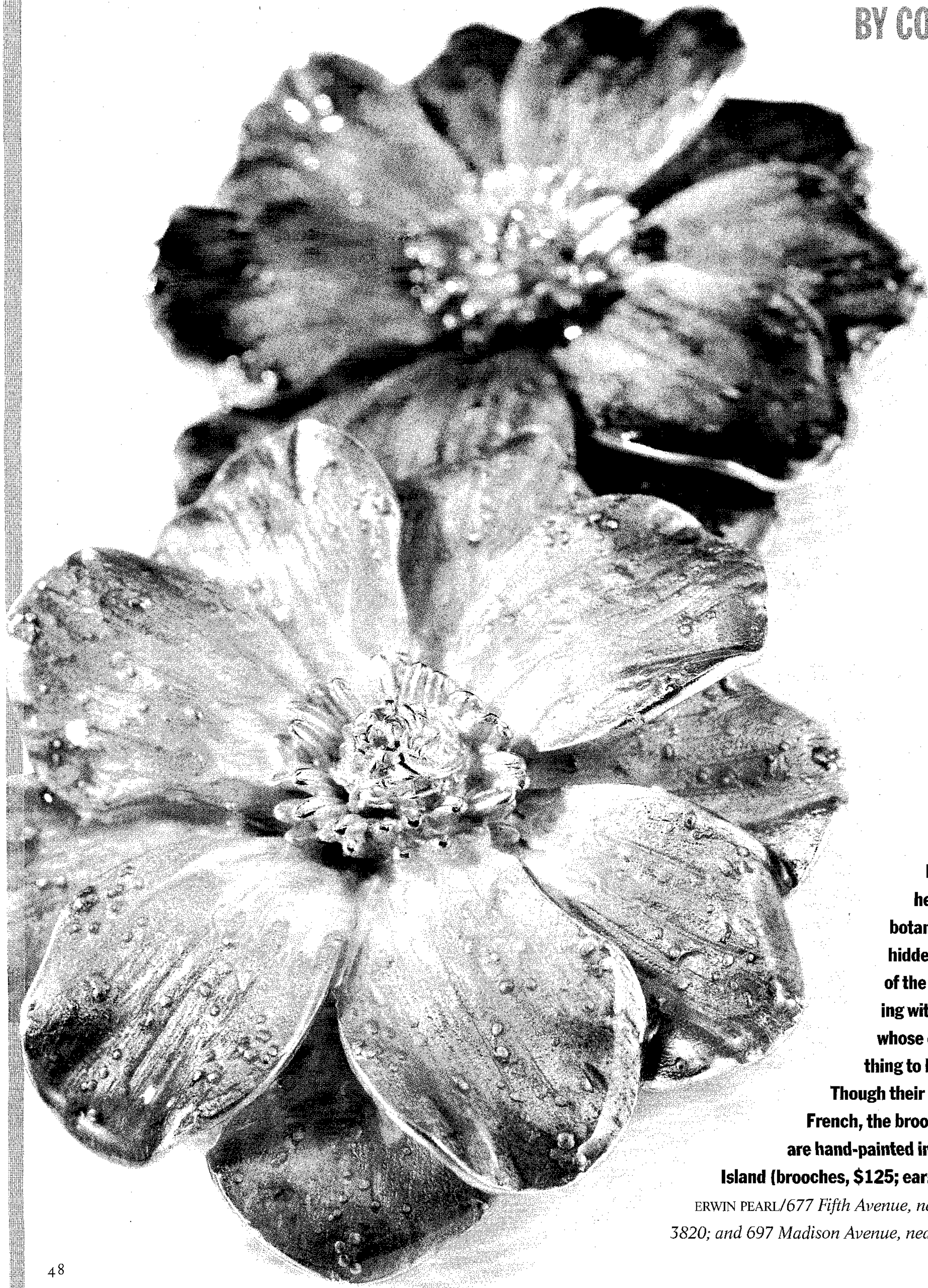
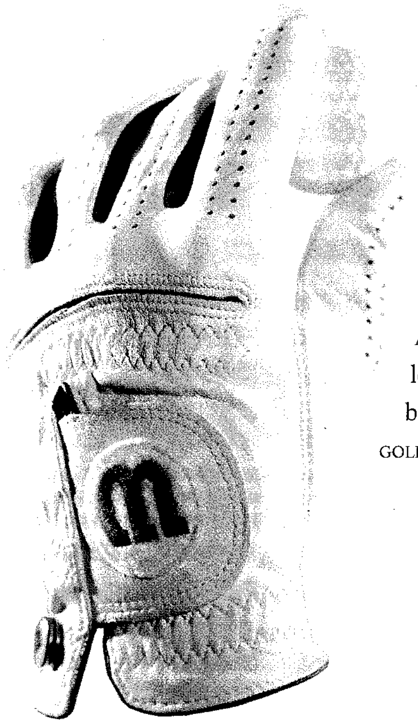
BY CORKY POLLAN



Secret Garden

Jewelry designer Erwin Pearl has heretofore kept his botanical leanings rather hidden. But now his shops of the same name are blooming with enamel flowers whose design owes everything to Monet and Giverny. Though their inspiration was French, the brooches (and earrings) are hand-painted in Providence, Rhode Island (brooches, $125; earrings, $85).

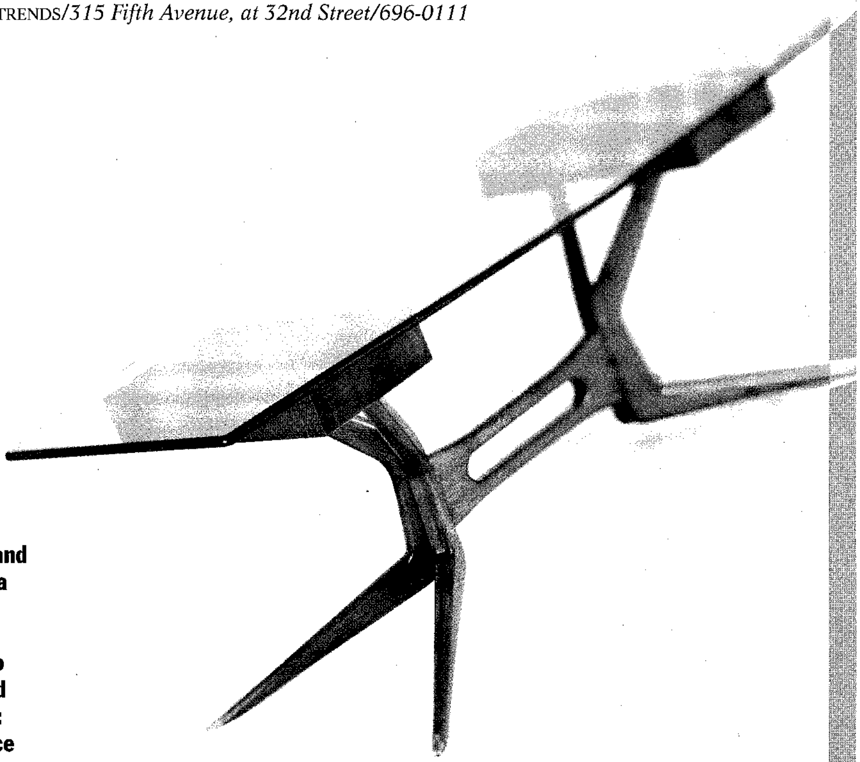
ERWIN PEARL/*677 Fifth Avenue, near 53rd Street/207-3820; and 697 Madison Avenue, near 62nd Street/753-3155*



Getting a Grip

By the time most golf gloves are broken in, they're frayed and gray and decidedly ratty-looking. But now Wilson has come up with a glove—the Ultra Tour—that eliminates the break-in bother. The Tour has a curved finger design (the palm is cut slightly shorter than the back), so it conforms to the natural shape of the hand from day one. And since it's made of Lycra and soft and supple cabretta leather, it does what a golf glove should: enhance the contact between golfer and club ($16).

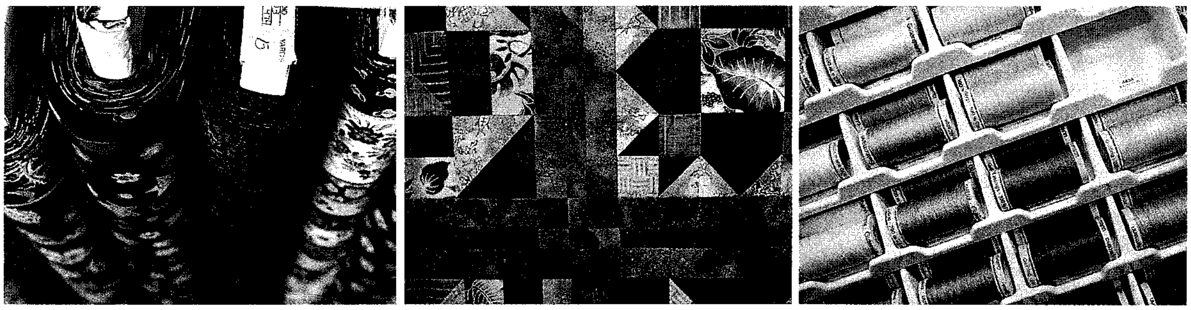
GOLF TRENDS/*315 Fifth Avenue, at 32nd Street/696-0111*



Postwar Heroes

Back in postwar Italy, designers like Gio Ponti and Ico Parisi were not yet the icons they were soon to become. However, even then they were well into Modernism, challenging traditional forms while maintaining Italian craftsmanship. Their early furniture pieces were mostly made in small workshops in very limited quantities—which explains why they are now so pricey and hard to come by. Yet at the Frank Rogin gallery (a mecca of twentieth-century design), you'll stumble upon a collection of rare early-fifties pieces: Ponti suede-and-leather sofas, a Parisi wood-and-glass desk, and an Aldo Tura amoebic vellum-and-wood table, among others. And each displays the characteristic attributes of the period: simplicity, organic shape, and a kind of graceful elegance (from $1,500 for a low table to $3,000 for the Tura cocktail table to $12,000 for the Parisi desk).

FRANK ROGIN INC./*21 Mercer Street/431-6545*



Calling It Quilts

Five years ago, Cathy Izzo, a CBS producer of prime-time movies, took up quilting as a hobby. The hobby soon turned into an obsession, and that obsession has now begotten the City Quilter. This small and spartan shop is livened by 500 bolts of fabric: solids, batiks, prints, and patterns of every shade and complexity. There's a stash of books both technical and inspirational, and classes for both the novice and the pro in such skills as foundation piecing and the needle-turn method of hand-appliquéing (from $4.98 a yard for solid fabrics to $15 a yard for Kona Bay prints).

THE CITY QUILTER/*157 West 24th Street/807-0390*

SALES & BARGAINS **DANY LEVY**

Spring Preening

Au printemps: Discount **dry cleaning** *for closet-changeover day; a spa that takes the edge off tax week; and air conditioners for the* **ominous weather** *to come.*

‘I AM A MAJOR COLLECTOR OF eclectic, manic weirdness,” admits floral designer Marlo Phillips, who puts a creative spin on every project she tackles. She makes her style sound gruff—it’s not. Her studio is a trove of sixteen years of collecting *objets* to incorporate into her floral design—furniture, prints, lace pillows, lamp shades, Victoriana, birdcages, and more. For the first time, she’s ready to clear the place out, so it’s all on sale. Prices range from $1 to priceless. *Marlo Flowers Ltd., 428A E. 75th St. (628-2246); A.E., M.C., V., and checks with I.D.; Mon.–Fri. 11–5, Sat. by appointment; 4/14–5/9.*

Business is blooming: Blossom wrangler Marlo Phillips in the riot of color and eclecticism that is Marlo Flowers.

Blissing Out

THE WAY WE SEE IT, BLISS IS SUCH A hopping day spa that the idea of its having a sale is a bit like Nobu doing an all-you-can-eat-sushi night. Nevertheless, once a year at tax time, the downtown spa discounts a service and calls it the Post-Tax Stress-Reduction Special. This year it’s the fully loaded facial—a two-hour treatment that includes a cleansing, a peel, an oxygen wrap, extraction, an application of collagen ampoules, and a seaweed mask, and is finished off with an oxygen blast. A simultaneous scalp treatment involves a generous application of various J. F. Lazartigue products. Usually $185, it’s now $150. *Bliss, 568 Broadway (219-8970), at Prince St.; A.E., M.C., V.; call for appointments; 4/15–5/15.*

Firme Holding

FOR THOSE BLEAK DAYS WHEN YOU’RE HANKering for a sample sale and the prospects are scant, here’s a spot filled with women’s clothing from haute Italian designers. It’s open year-round, and prices are 50 to 80 percent off retail: blazers that retail for $350, here $150; suits that retail for $750, here $200–$300. Fall merchandise is also now 50 to 70 percent off wholesale. *Le Firme, 37 West 57th St., room 401 (888-3433); Mon.–Fri. 10–7, Sat. 10–4, or by appointment; A.E., M.C., V.; 4/14–4/30.*

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Dany Levy, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to “Sales & Bargains” and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

Outer Limits

OUTER VISION, A CACHE OF HIGH-STYLE eyewear that has been around for nineteen years, is clearing out two decades of stock, and frames that date from the seventies through the present are discounted by 20 to 70 percent. Those seeking the cutting edge get a discount, too: The shop’s current stock is 20 percent off. Designer wire frame, was $255, now $198; retro horn frame, was $275, now $80. *Outer Vision, 1400 Broadway, between 38th and 39th Sts. (221-4595); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.–Fri. 9–6; 4/15–4/18.*

Good Old Days

THERE’S SCADS OF COOL STUFF TO BE found at the Good Old Lower East Side Thrift Shop—it’s crammed with finds like a pair of Ferragamo pumps from the seventies priced at $6 as well as plain old ultrabargain basics. What’s more, the shop, which benefits housing development, tenant advocacy, and literacy and job development, recently received a curious donation that includes an extensive selection of sheep-related items and wedding-cake bride-and-groom sets. *Good Old Lower East Side, 169 Ave. B, near 10th St. (358-1231); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 12–5; 4/16–4/18.*

Dry Season

THE DISCOUNT DRY CLEANING FACTOry, an East Village plant run by the guys who used to own the Personal Touch Valet chain, has great prices year-round and for the next month is offering an additional 10 percent off. So dry cleaning of men’s or women’s coat, was $9.50, now $8.55; women’s blouse, was $3, now $2.70. *Discount Dry Cleaning Factory, 427 E. 13th St. (477-0800); cash only; Mon.–Fri. 7–6; Sat. 8–5; 4/14–5/14.*

Low Whisks

S. FELDMAN HOUSEWARES IS NOW DIScounting a few selected pieces in its ultrasleek Rösle line of cooking tools. For example, mezzaluna chopper, was $69.50, now $56; three-piece whisk set, was $50, now $40; ladle-spoon-and-spatula set, was $106, now $85. *S. Feldman Housewares, 1304 Madison Ave., near 93rd St. (289-7367); A.E., M.C., V., and checks; Mon.–Sat. 9–6; 4/14–5/31.*

Putting on Airs

FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, RCI IS DROPPING prices on air conditioners. For example, White Westinghouse scratch-and-dent, 7,000 Btu, 6.6 amps, 9.5 EER, was $430, now $299; White Westinghouse, 5,450 Btu, 5.2 amps, 10 EER, was $299, now $229. Others on sale include Friedrich, Frigidaire, Panasonic, and Emerson. The shop also carries major appliances; those on sale include: Samsung microwave oven, regularly $109, now $89. *RCI, 2599 Broadway, near 98th St. (864-6000); A.E., M.C., V., and checks; Mon.–Fri. 9–7, Sat. 9–6, Sun. noon–5; 4/14–5/26.* ■

Photograph by Steffen Thalemann.

MOVIES DAVID DENBY

Sibling Revelries

Recalling the great teens-in-love movies of the fifties, 'Inventing the Abbotts' evokes a time when sex and love were dangerous, if not necessarily lethal.

Splendor in the past: Joaquin Phoenix falls for Liv Tyler in Pat O'Connor's *Inventing the Abbotts.*

Photograph by Merie W. Wallace/Twentieth Century Fox.

ONCE IN A WHILE YOU MEET an appealing man in his late twenties or early thirties who is charming but mysteriously cut off and hidden in some way. Among other things, the lovely new Pat O'Connor movie, **Inventing the Abbotts,** shows you the early life of one such cipher. Jacey Holt (Billy Crudup) is a good-looking teenager in the Elvis-permeated late fifties—the time when good-looking American teenagers first realized the world belonged to them. But Jacey carries a sense of grievance that he only half understands. In small-town Illinois, he lives on the wrong side of the tracks: His father is dead, his mother is a teacher, and he has to work in a garage to make money. Jacey becomes obsessed with three wealthy sisters, the Abbott girls, all tall and beautiful, and he sleeps with first one and then another, causing havoc with each affair. He's not in love with any of them; he doesn't even see the girls clearly. He has "invented" them in his head, as something to conquer. *Inventing the Abbotts,* based on a short story by Sue Miller (Ken Hixon did the adaptation), has a theme out of Theodore Dreiser. It's one of the rare American movies that portray the sex drive of a young man as something integrally related to class and social ambition. Jacey is literally consumed by his antagonisms.

We see Jacey through the eyes of his younger and gentler brother, Doug (Joaquin Phoenix), who initially admires Jacey's skills with women and then comes to pity his brother. The two actors go well together. Crudup has straight black hair, dark eyes, and a strong jaw; he's tight and aggressive. Joaquin Phoenix is less conventionally handsome—more retiring and a little hangdog, with a scarred lip but hungry eyes. In the second half of the movie, his Doug slides very slowly into a relationship with the youngest Abbott daughter, Pamela, played by the strapping Liv Tyler, who is awkwardly beautiful. With her mouth primly closed—Pam doesn't want to be taken as a "fast" girl like her older sister Eleanor (Jennifer Connelly)—Tyler does a convincing impersonation of a swan hiding as an ugly duckling. Tyler has a big upper lip, and when she kisses Phoenix, the two of them, with their funny lips, look happily mated.

The charm of the movie, as you may have gathered, lies in its attention to all the hesitations, longings, and emotional transgressions of fifties teen life—a time when sex was still a danger, even a kind of crime, and class mattered a great deal yet still could be transcended by love.

Inventing the Abbotts is slow and a little square; it doesn't have anything of the emotional rawness or tumult of *Rebel Without a Cause* or *East of Eden* or *Splendor in the Grass*—the most famous movies about teens actually made in the fifties (or just after), by Nicholas Ray and Elia Kazan. The Irish director Pat O'Connor (*Cal, Circle of Friends*) lacks fire (a fight between Crudup and Phoenix is pretty much a joke). And O'Connor is so eager to maintain an intimate scale that he misses some obvious occasions for glamour and excitement—refusing to photograph the three sisters together, for instance, so we could savor and compare them as the two brothers do. The action is surrounded by voice-over narration delivered by the mature Doug looking back from some safe and wise vantage point—an inherently moralistic device, since he's the "good" brother and our response to Jacey is controlled first by Doug's jealousy and then by his contempt (it might have worked better to alternate Doug and Jacey looking back). It's one thing to be led toward virtue, another to be coerced into it.

Still, this is an intelligent and absorbing romantic drama, beautifully mounted, emotionally saturated. I relaxed into it, grateful to have my tempo slowed down. And it's a strong movie—not soft or nostalgic but respectful of fifties America as a society more clearly structured than our own. I enjoyed all the richly colored

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observation of social life at parties, on porches, and in cars in the time of America's fabled "troubled" adolescents, when the new consumer confidence was beginning to dissolve the wartime austerities. The movie captures the strain, the uncertainty of a country shifting its values.

The past still mattered then: Much of the story falls out of events that took place between the kids' parents a generation earlier. As the boys' mother, Kathy Baker brings a sense of humor to a limited role. She talks straight to her teenage sons, as if they were independent men whose ornery quirks had to be respected. Things haven't gone easily for her character, and Baker is stoic about it; she can't remake her life or help her hyperambitious son, who is determined to screw his way into the upper middle class. And Billy Crudup, cool but intense, is a possible star presence. He gives a wary, intriguing performance: The older Jacey gets, the more remote Crudup seems, the less comprehensible to himself. Jacey winds up hurting a lot of people and he doesn't know why. As Doug comes out of his shell, Jacey retires into one—for life, we think.

MOVIES

The Daytrippers IS A SHAGGY-DOG STORY THAT turns into a bittersweet comedy about mismatched couples and loneliness. A suburban woman (Hope Davis) happily married to a New York publishing executive (Stanley Tucci) discovers a mysterious love letter in her husband's things. Is he having an affair? With her dissatisfied parents, her bickering sister, and her sister's boyfriend improbably in tow, she searches through Manhattan for her husband, who seems to be spending the day with his lover.

As these loquacious people travel about, they have one odd adventure after another, picking up and discarding various strangers in the city, and by the end of the day, as long-held irritations come to the surface, it has become clear that both the young wife and her sister have been forced into unsuccessful relationships by their pile-driving mother. The writer-director, Greg Mottola, shares with David O. Russell, the director of *Flirting With Disaster,* a satiric, picaresque style—loosely inclusive, chatty, naggingly funny. Mottola depends on vignettes that push just slightly past realism. It takes us a while to realize what the film is about—that the mother and her two daughters are the center of it. At first we're inundated with talk, some of it very funny and good, including a weird kind of running commentary provided by the boyfriend, who recites the plot of his goofy sci-fi novel.

Mottola also shares with Russell a penchant for working very close to embarrassment. Both directors put people we like on the screen and then force them to make fools of themselves. Here it's Anne Meara as the mother who gets pushed into an almost Shelley Winters–style hysteria. Monstrous but lovable, Meara's crazy mom favors men for her daughters who share her emotionalism; she sets herself up for betrayal and then can't believe it when it happens. In its small way, this New York independent movie is very penetrating. See it for the actors, including Campbell Scott as a cruising novelist, Parker Posey as the sister, and, as Parker's boyfriend, Liev Schreiber, playing a painfully self-conscious prig who discovers, as he talks his way into trouble, an abyss opening at his feet.

In brief: THERE ARE A COUPLE OF WILD EROTic monologues and some very funny riffs in Kevin Smith's low-budget **Chasing Amy,** which is the story of a love affair between two comic-book artists—Holden (Ben Affleck) and Alyssa (Joey Lauren Adams), who is a lesbian. Holden, it turns out, can deal with the lesbianism but not with certain other erotic events in Alyssa's past. Yet despite its uproarious carnal humor and knowledgeable reporting on the comic-book scene, the movie becomes rather trying: What could have been a good dirty lyric on the evanescence of love turns rather turgid and emotionally overexplicit. . . . **The Saint** is what big-studio Hollywood desperately wants to make and what it entirely deserves to fail with. Director Phillip Noyce, who should know better, has given himself over to an obvious attempt to revisit the 007 genre, with Val Kilmer in the would-be franchise role of a charming but "cold" orphan who has become an inscrutable master thief and seducer (George Sanders in movies and Roger Moore on TV did the role in the past). Produced on a monstrous scale, *The Saint* is mainly an endless chase with some striking use of Moscow backgrounds and some nastily energetic Russian and Eastern European actors. Elisabeth Shue is wasted in an unplayable role as a "brilliant" but humanly inept scientist, and there isn't a ghost of a point anywhere. The movie is ostensibly about cold fusion and the future of Russia, but it's all weightless nonsense, made with speed but no discernible style. In the past, Noyce, the director of *Clear and Present Danger,* had seemed a master of the Hollywood machine, but this time he gets steamrollered by it. . . . David Edelstein, one of the most talented and original movie critics of the eighties (he wrote for the *Voice* and then for the *Post*), has returned to his calling at *Slate,* the online magazine, after some years in the wilderness. I don't think any movie critic can save the world from *The Saint,* but at least there's another strong voice out there trying. ■

MIM UDOVITCH

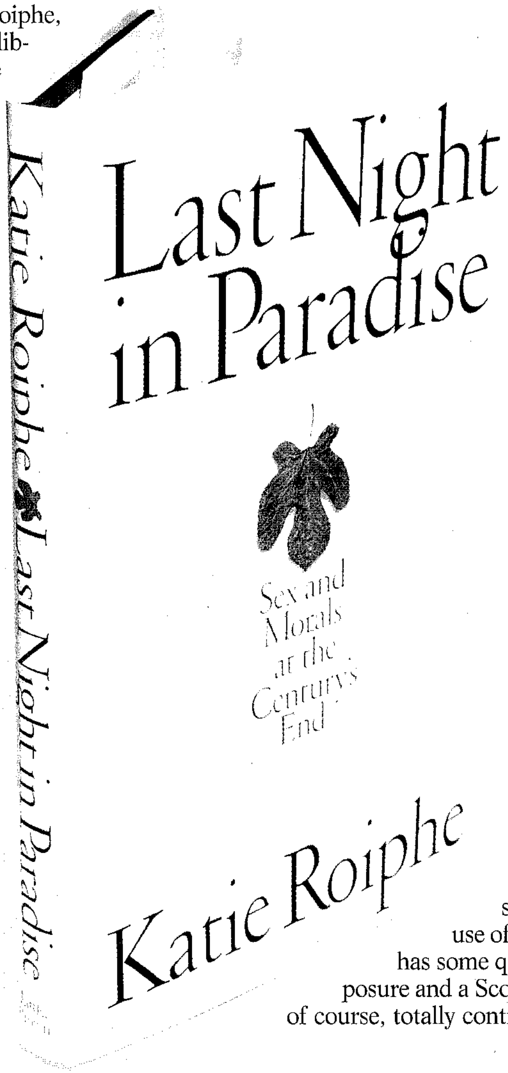
Girls' Night In

Katie Roiphe and Naomi Wolf offer differing cultural diagnoses for the sexual complexes of young women. Wolf's theory is overblown. Roiphe's is a muddle.

Promiscuities
BY NAOMI WOLF
Random House; $23

Last Night in Paradise
BY KATIE ROIPHE
Little, Brown; 193 pages; $21.95

IT'S SPRING, AND A YOUNG FEMINIST'S FANCY TURNS ponderously to thoughts of the culturally imposed obstacles to an ideologically better sexuality for contemporary teens and young adults. Of course, given that the young feminists in question are Naomi Wolf and Katie Roiphe, their thoughts on just what those obstacles are and what kind of sexuality would be ideologically better are not the same. And given that each writer revisits themes from earlier work—Wolf, the oppressive nature of anti-woman cultural imagery, and Roiphe, the oppressive nature of anti-sex liberal imagery—basically, what we have here are two books that are the equivalent of that *Star Trek* episode where the guy with the half-white, half-black face is chasing the guy with the half-black, half-white face through all time and space without ever getting nearer to a resolution.



This is, I guess, what feminist debate has come to, and it is ironic—like rain on your wedding day—that both these books pay only cursory attention to the world of contemporary youth that they nominally address, and are at their absolute worst in explicating and supporting the ideological and cultural-critical approaches that constitute their primary selling points. It is even more ironic—like 10,000 spoons when all you need is a knife—that the strength of each is in whatever portion the author gives over to that currently contemptible genre, the woman's personal memoir.

It is partly for this reason that Wolf's *Promiscuities: the Secret Struggle for Womanhood* is by far the better book; recounting her own childhood and adolescence in detail is part of Wolf's game plan, and she does it with a candor and sense of atmosphere that are sometimes reminiscent of Mary McCarthy's *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood.* This is intended as high praise, and if these tales of growing up in post-sexual-revolution San Francisco had been extracted from the sloppy tracts of analysis that surround them, it is ironic—like a NO-SMOKING sign on your cigarette break—that Wolf would have provided teenage girls with a valid construct within which to assess their own experience.

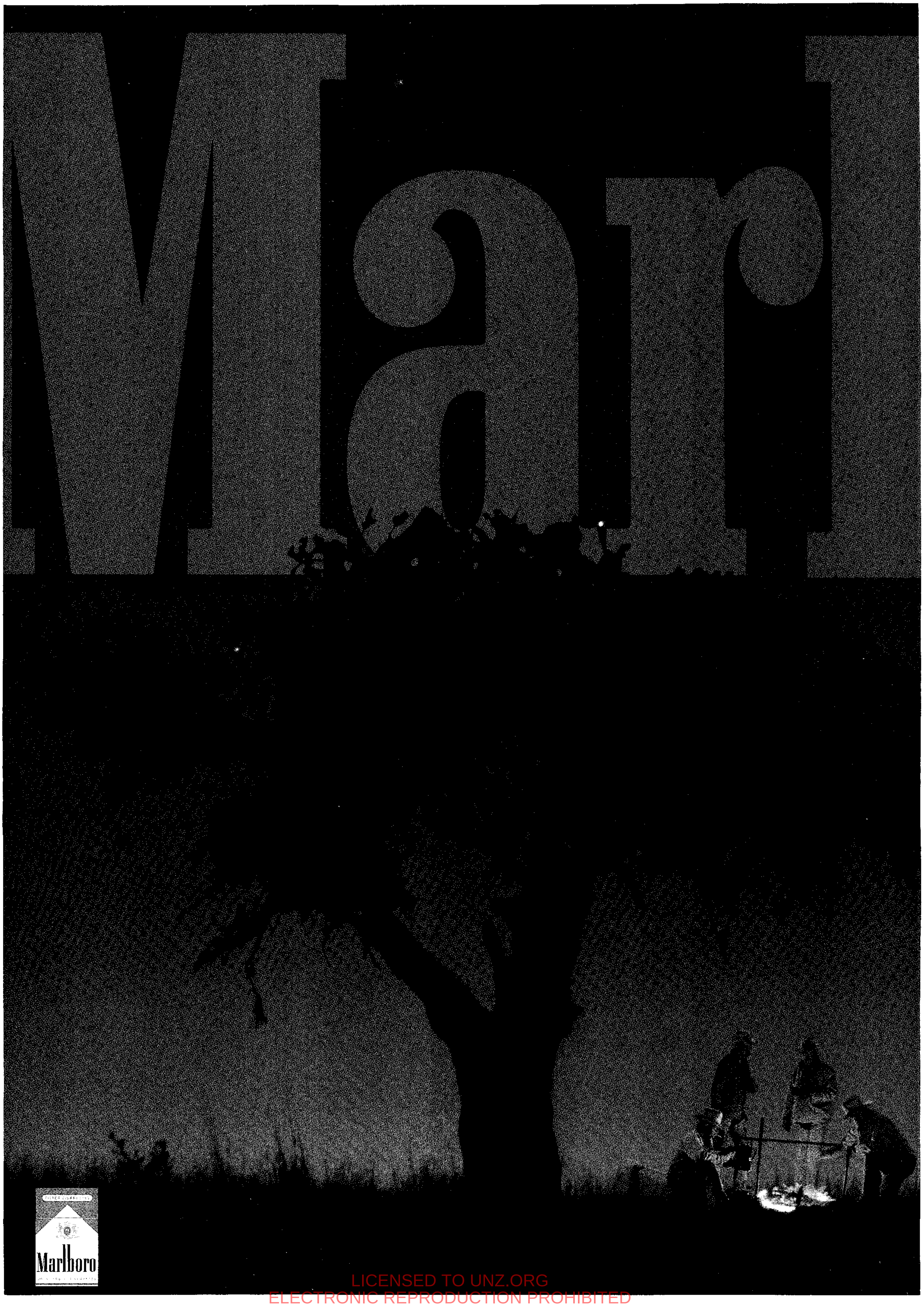
Once Katie Roiphe got into the sex-and-danger business, she found it hard to stop.

However. Wolf constantly undermines the basically sound essentials of her argument. This is, more or less, that most of the sexual imagery to which teen girls are exposed is not generated with teen girls in mind, and that they suffer insecurity and a lack of options in the role-model department because of it.

These are nice points, and she also writes very well about bras and Barbies. But Wolf is possessed by a compulsion to overstate her case so extreme that where her arguments are not buffoonish, they are intellectually dishonest. "If only there had been something saying that we were all of like gender, and this is what to expect, and that there's . . . a goodness in it for us," Wolf quotes a contemporary as saying of the available information about female sexuality during their teen years. I'm not suggesting that the mid-seventies liberal, middle-class environment in which Wolf spent her girlhood was designed around the imperative of giving teen girls safe sexual pleasure. But quite apart from such stalwarts as *The Hite Report* and *Our Bodies, Ourselves*—of which Wolf was, as she writes, perfectly aware—I also grew up in such an environment, and may I say: *Hello?* Judy Blume?

Really, I would just like to place an overall Stalinist ban, starting now, on the ideological use of pop culture unless the ideologue has some qualification other than casual exposure and a Scooby-Doo lunch box. This would, of course, totally contradict everything I believe about

Photographs: top, Deborah Jaffe; bottom, Wayne Simpson.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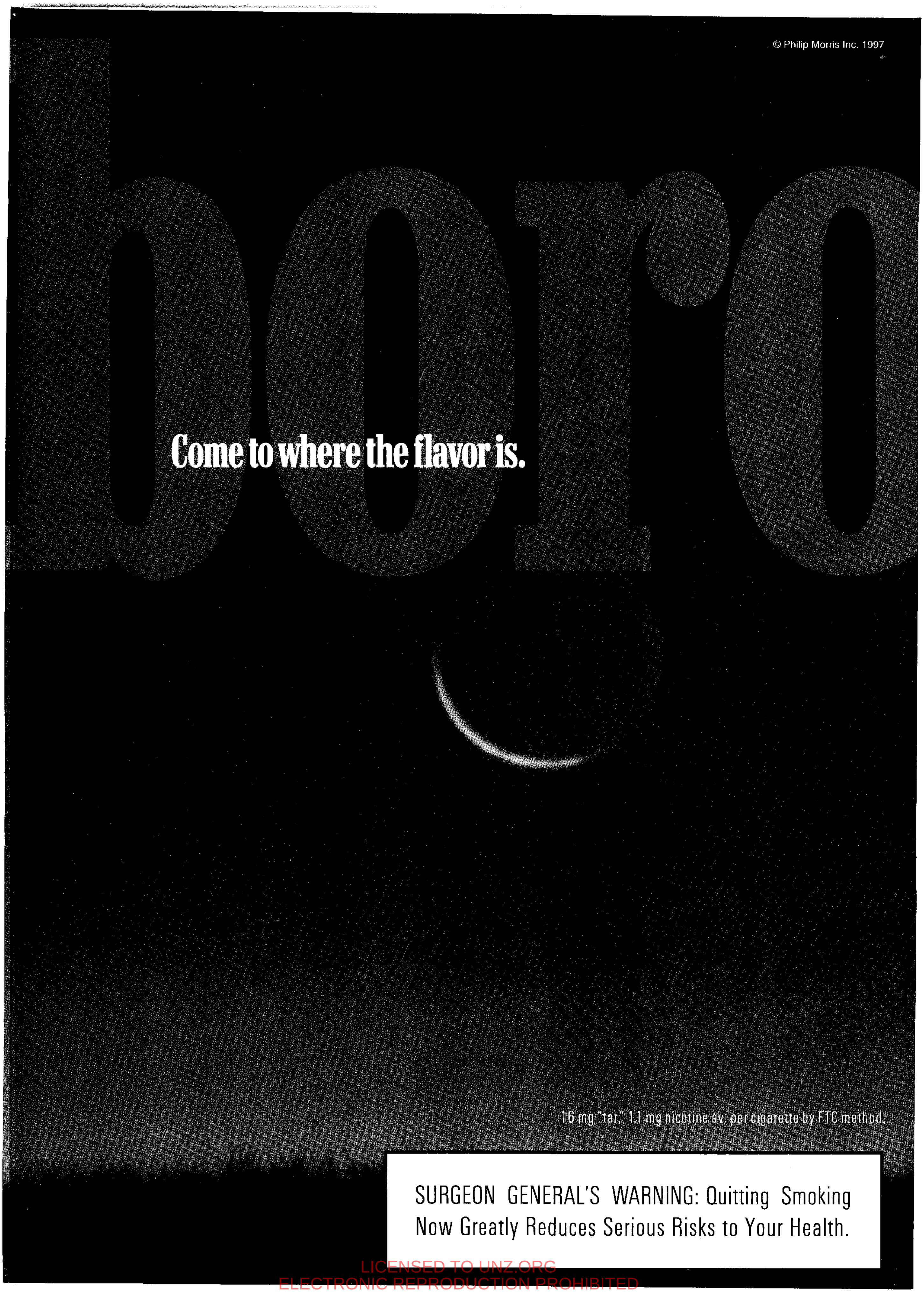
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populist forms as a politically, sexually, and spiritually liberating force. But Wolf's citation, early on in *Promiscuities,* of "Just My Imagination" (Temptations, not Stones) as an example of "songs about 'becoming a woman' centered on the woman's vagueness and lack of reality" got me so upset that I made notes like "could not win a $50 prize in the cultural-critique competition at the county fair" for a good 40 pages.

I understand that despite the authoritative phrasing, what Wolf is really saying is that she heard the song that way; and I acknowledge that it is a little unfair for me to unleash upon *Promiscuities* a fury that has been welling within me on this subject ever since Camille Paglia first bounced and blared into public view like the clown on a spring that she is. But if you absolutely had to subject "Just My Imagination" to a single reductive interpretation, the woman referred to is not vague to the singer; it is his reality that is vague to her. If it is "about" anything, it is "about" (in a long tradition in popular music by both men and women) imagination (go ahead, ask me what was my first clue), the necessity of allowing which to safely roam free is, p.s., part of Wolf's topic.

Furthermore, other big singles to hit the charts in the same year that "Just My Imagination" was causing girls to lose their sense of their own identities would have included James Taylor's "You've Got a Friend" and Melanie's "Brand New Key," than which a perkier, safer representation of female sexuality for an 11-year-old would be hard to come by.

Wolf's selectivity here (and the doubt it casts on her overall reliability as a historian) turns what should be a chronicle of demonstrable prejudice and oppression into some sort of blind flailing about in search of mass-cultural evidence to support an assertion that is *through this very process* rapidly becoming a vast exaggeration of a partially acknowledged truth. This reaches a kind of apotheosis toward the end of *Promiscuities,* when the last scene of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is held accountable for making teen girls feel that heterosexual monogamy was uncool.

"We can encourage [teen girls] to believe that the notion that female sexuality participates in the divine image should not remain a curiosity in history books but should be a presumption underpinning their daily lives," writes Wolf. Frankly, if one scene in one movie is enough to seriously compromise the presumption that heterosexual monogamy is the highly desirable norm, I don't see how even a full return to worshipping the powerful and sexually sacred goddesses of agrarian Mesopotamia is going to make much of a damn difference. Somewhere, sometime, somehow, someone will put a quarter in the wrong hands near a jukebox, and the next thing you know, the teen girls will all have been hopelessly indoctrinated by "Sweet Emotion."

Besides which, by advocating as an alternative a sort of gentle, gynocentric hand-holding approach to the teen girls' rite of passage, Wolf herself devalues her own experience in groping toward independence, as well as that of the entity she at one point refers to as "the teenage girl as she is beginning to emerge within our debates." Wolf proposes having older women lead adolescent girls on wilderness retreats where, "amid stories, songs, and hikes," the questions asked would be "far more trusting and substantive than those asked in the constrained public environment of a sex ed class." And I guess there's no harm in that except for the harm the adolescent girls might encounter when they sneak away and hitch rides into town.

IF WOLF IS IN SOME SORT OF REVISIONIST DENIAL about the rebellious teenager, she need only take a look at Katie Roiphe, who, though not actually a rebellious teenager, plays one in her books. In her debut, *The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism,* Roiphe was primarily interested in castigating wicked feminists for inventing date rape and ruining her good time. In *Last Night in Paradise,* she takes on the culture of AIDS, which is not only devastating various populations across the planet but causing anxiety among the elite heterosexual youth to whom it poses the least threat and among whom she happens to dwell.

Wolf: The accidental theorist.

Roiphe does not have to look far to find proof for her main argument, which is essentially that preexisting puritanical forces in our culture have piggybacked themselves onto AIDS activism as a great new way to demonize sex. And indeed she does not look far, having evidently concluded the research phase after a Nexis search and a few shallow stabs at real! live! reporting!

As with *Promiscuities, Last Night in Paradise* is a far more expressive work where it is most simply autobiographical. The rest is rife with internal contradiction, historical vagueness, and eventually straw men of every description knocked this way and that, cluttering the place up and making it difficult to find anything. It's hard not to suspect that Roiphe didn't actually want to write this book, but that having lurched into the sex-and-danger business with the first one, now sees no option but to continue, however feebly, no matter what her experiences and inclinations really are.

At one point, while riffing on the AIDS-advisory slogan that you are having sex with everyone your partner has ever had sex with, she posits that an Australian ad showing couples on beds multiplying identically into infinity is actually telling us: *"You think you're special, but you're not."* The closest I can come to explaining the air of targetless agitation that hovers over this book is that it is this emotional threat, rather than any moral one, that has Roiphe upset, and only through a sublimation that requires her to pretend that it is not her identity but the freedom of a generation that is at risk, is she able to address it. That or else she was afraid that if she returned the advance, she would be grounded.

ALL RIGHT, NO MORE KIDDING AROUND. I DO wonder when it became unwritten law that having once written any identity-politics-related book, you have to produce another substantially similar one every several years whether you have any true elaboration on your previous work to make or not. It is ironic—like a free ride when you've already paid—especially for Wolf, whose obviously sincere commitment I respect, that, while this is a good strategy for pop, writing a book you've slapped together based on research that was guided by an extant bias is not the same as Petula Clark following up "Downtown" with "I Know a Place."

I say rock on in the fight to protect and liberate women, who, I happen to agree with Wolf, are a primary group adversely affected by these issues. I also happen to agree with both Wolf and Roiphe that striving for a less freighted attitude toward sexuality is striving for freedom, and that two sources of the freight are the devaluation of female sexuality and the deeply embedded punitive morality that is the legacy of an originally Puritan society. They are not, however, the only sources, nor are they so global that some small options to them do not exist.

To proceed as if these things were not so is absurd. It does not advance any cause worth advancing to suppress or distort these or any other truths, just because acknowledging them happens to make your argument more complex than a T-shirt slogan. To do so is to true political discussion as Brooke Astor is to poetry: a joke without humor. It is inexpressibly depressing to me that the sloppy methodology and polemical excesses of both books make this topic look so risible that, ultimately, their main achievement is to cloud and corrupt the potential for more productive debate.

Isn't it ironic, in more than the Alanis Morissette sense? Don'tcha think? ■

Photograph by Marion Ettlinger/Outline.

JOHN SIMON

Bleak *House*

The reworked revival of Ibsen's 'A Doll's House' is overheated, even for a cold climate; Craig Lucas's latest play, 'God's Heart,' is simply god-awful.

SELDOM WAS DIRECTORIAL ADVICE MORE PREGNANT than Noël Coward's to a Method actor: "Don't just do something, stand there!" I wonder what Sir Noël would have said to Janet McTeer as she fidgets and fusses with her hair, squirms and squeals, burbles and blusters through the role of Nora in Ibsen's **A Doll's House**? (In America, the play should be titled *A Doll House,* as that toy is called here.) She lets her hands flutter like Tibetan prayer wheels in a gale, outcoos a turtle dove in heat, and flings herself about as if playing racquetball with her own six-foot-plus body. This is what is known nowadays as rethinking the classics.

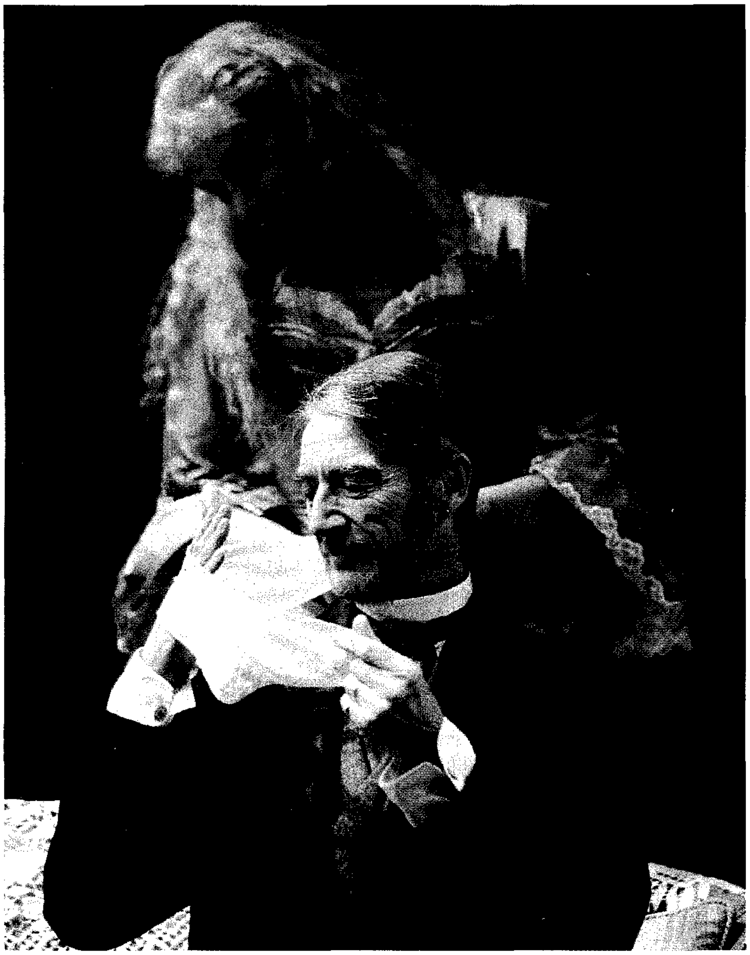
In this interpretation of Ibsen's admittedly somewhat creakily contrived but humane and influential drama, which Miss McTeer evolved with her director, Anthony Page, there are two putatively significant innovations. First, the marriage of sweet little Nora and patriarchally overbearing Torvald Helmer is perceived as going gangbusters sexually. At any moment, the pair will fly into passionate clinches—1879 Norway miraculously transported to 1997 Hollywood—and we wonder how long it will be before the nude copulation scene. Second, the actress projects from the start a deep-seated but repressed discontent with her marriage: Her busyness is overcompensation for being patronized as a less-than-equal.

Interesting, but what is gained? Ibsen's aim was to show what was stiflingly wrong with the marriages of his era, not how sexual slavery can keep an independent-minded woman from striking out on her own. And if Nora was so basically self-aware and clear-sighted, would she have naïvely forged her father's signature, even in a good cause, without awareness of the consequences? This generous but foolish act was intended by Ibsen to show the dangers of women's being overprotected and undereducated.

It is true that in the last quarter, when the drama heats up and the star stops inventing perpetual motion, things become gripping. Yet even then, can we really feel that Nora's leaving Torvald and her children is something tragic but inevitable rather than a much-needed rest cure for a husband whose wife suffers from Saint Vitus' dance? On the other hand, Owen Teale so overplays Torvald's unthinking complacency, complete with a déclassé regional accent, that Nora's desertion for a parlously uncertain future comes across less as feminist self-realization than as search for a mate with a commensurate I.Q.

Except for a wretched wig, John Carlisle's Dr. Rank satisfies. I do, however, have problems with Peter Gowen's befuddled, almost yokelish Krogstad: Perhaps he is puzzled by various cast members' differing pronunciations of his name. If she weren't overgroomed and over-rouged, Jan Maxwell would be a first-rate Kristine Linde, the rare case where the only American—in a supporting part, at that—outshines the visitors from England.

Frank McGuinness's "new version" of the play is, happily, not all that new, though expressions such as "Little Miss Stubbornshoes" may strike us as a trifle transatlantic. But there is nothing about this highly touted British production that is smashing, even if Miss McTeer does smash the tambourine with which, after conspiratorially winking at us, she danced her etymologically misjudged



Paper dolls: Janet McTeer and John Carlisle in *A Doll's House*.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

tarantella. The term is derived from the town of Taranto, not, like so much of her performance, from the bite of a tarantula.

SHOULDN'T IT BE AXIOMATIC THAT YOU CAN base a musical revue on the work of a composer but not on that of a lyricist? Like others of that trade, Johnny Mercer adapted his words to the tastes of sundry composers, seventeen of whom are represented in **Dream.** Hence no consistency in either words or music. This show, which features not one but two scenic choo-choos, was shunted to the wrong track, which led to Broadway. Roughly half of its dozen or so producers are from the Palm Beach area, and they should have toured *Dream* through states rife with retirees who might be pleased to indulge their nostalgia for the good old days when Tin Pan Alley was in bloom.

Mercer, to be sure, sometimes wrote his own music, as he did for five numbers in this revue. But five songs out of 44 is hardly enough to lend congruity and profile to a scattershot medley more befitting an intimate nightclub. Once, however, you put on a piece of theater with such grandiose section headings as "The Age of Innocence" and "The Age of Decadence," some sort of structure becomes incumbent. Then again, what do I know? The quite similar *Smokey Joe's Cafe,* which I called and still call claptrap, is with us yet.

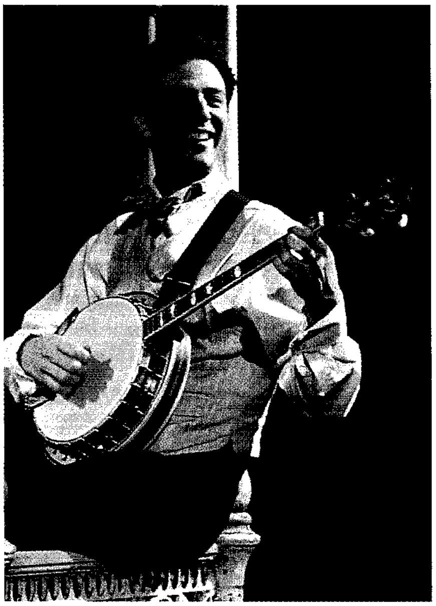
This tribute to Mercer strains to star Lesley Ann Warren, who comes across as an over-the-hill hat-check girl with delusions of divadom and modest talents for slinking, undulating, and bluesy singing, in that order. Co-starring is Margaret Whiting, an iron maiden, senior division, once actually coached by Johnny Mercer. She is the sort of performer whom one customarily dubs The Last of the —— (you fill in the blank) until the next Last is found. Also starring is the amiable singer-guitarist John Pizzarelli with his Trio.

Wayne Cilento has choreographed the first act routinely, the second a bit better. David Mitchell has designed serviceable scenery on a no doubt unfriendly budget; Ann Hould-Ward's costumes are merely up to her not inconsiderable second-best, and Ken Billington, who has over the years developed into a major lighting designer, cuts loose with bold scenic effects. The supporting cast, although not high on looks, performs stoutly, with the drolly hyperactive Jessica Molaskey scoring the one surefire winner in "Something's Gotta Give." The vocal and dance arrangements range from the cheekily anachronistic to the mildly annoying. No matter, *Dream* is what it is: a venture so transient it should start on its journey to the hinterlands as soon as those cardboard trains can be loaded onto a real one.

CRAIG LUCAS'S **God's Heart** DOES AS LITTLE for its nominal subject as for its presumptive source, man's brain. It concerns the shared dream of three sleepers: a black youth in (I surmise) Washington Square Park, who may be doing his high-school homework while acting as a lookout for a crack dealer; a young white mother and doctor's wife bursting with hope and universal love; and the white partner in a lesbian couple journeying to New York, where her black lover, dying of cancer, is to pick up a peculiar award. I suppose I shouldn't have told you that the show-offy, absurd, and often impenetrable goings-on are only a dream (a cowardly device), but since you may not, in your right mind, last the course, I thought I'd let you know. Also that the play, abysmal in its first act, manages to sink lower in the second, where vaulting metaphysics and bathetic banality proliferate.

Craig Lucas, who had tried his hand unsteadily before, made it on the success of his *Prelude to a Kiss,* for which the *Times*'s then chief drama critic went to bat with unprecedented determination. To my mind, the play was a piece of dishonest camp, but even I would not have foreseen the grandiose garbage of *God's Heart* being put on—not as a put-on—by Lincoln Center Theater. Yet what other Off Broadway outfit could accommodate the complex technology this show requires: relentlessly pyrotechnical video effects with computers working themselves into a frenzy—the sort of thing more and more substituted for artistic merit?

Joe Mantello has rather too trickily directed a vastly uneven cast in which even such genuine talents as Amy Brenneman, Viola Davis, and Julie Kavner emerge no better than the rest. At the end of his program bio, Lucas informs us that he and his lover, Patrick Barnes, have recently published an essay in the anthology *Two Hearts* [*sic*] *Desire.* Evidently the author of *God's Heart* has heart to spare; I just wish he would spare us the surplus.



First string: John Pizzarelli in *Dream.*

AFTER SUCH THINGS, PATRICK MARBER'S **Dealer's Choice** comes as relief. This is a small, unassuming play about the events leading up to an all-night poker game that takes place every Sunday night in the basement of a London restaurant. Actually, it begins with a split stage: To one side, the kitchen staff goes about its culinary and waiterly business, illicitly drinking the boss's most expensive wines and horsing around. To the other side is the dining room where Ash, a solitary last diner, dawdles provokingly, and where Stephen, the owner, has a painful quarrel with his young gambler son, Carl, who has incurred major gambling debts elsewhere and now tries to wheedle more money out of Dad for tonight's game.

Baiting one another in the kitchen are Sweeney, the laconic cook; Frankie, a dapperly supercilious senior waiter; and Mugsy, a silly but likable younger waiter who wants to convert a disused public toilet into a restaurant and hopes Stephen will stake him. The poker game looms large. Everyone here has won from, or lost to, everyone else, owes or is owed a good deal. The canny Stephen, himself an eager participant, stores every game in his computer.

This time round, Ash—a tough, cynical, sinister figure—agrees to join the game: He is the professional gambler who led Carl astray and is now his impatient creditor. You may conclude that it all sounds like penny-ante stuff, and I cannot entirely disagree. If I were to adduce in Marber's favor that his play suggests bigger issues than those immediately apparent, you might conclude that it is symbolic or, riskier yet, allegorical. It isn't, but basic human problems do peep through: A poker game alone will not carry a climactic final act, or else poker-illiterates like me would be completely cut out of the deal. To the author's credit, though, I did get involved and excited, with good acting and John Tillinger's vivid direction helping immensely.

Only don't expect a revelation; just a well-crafted working-class tale in which sharp observation of human addiction couched in snappy dialogue holds the interest. Particularly well observed is the intramural tightness of this little group where the same money circulates back and forth among the same players. But things change when Ash arrives.

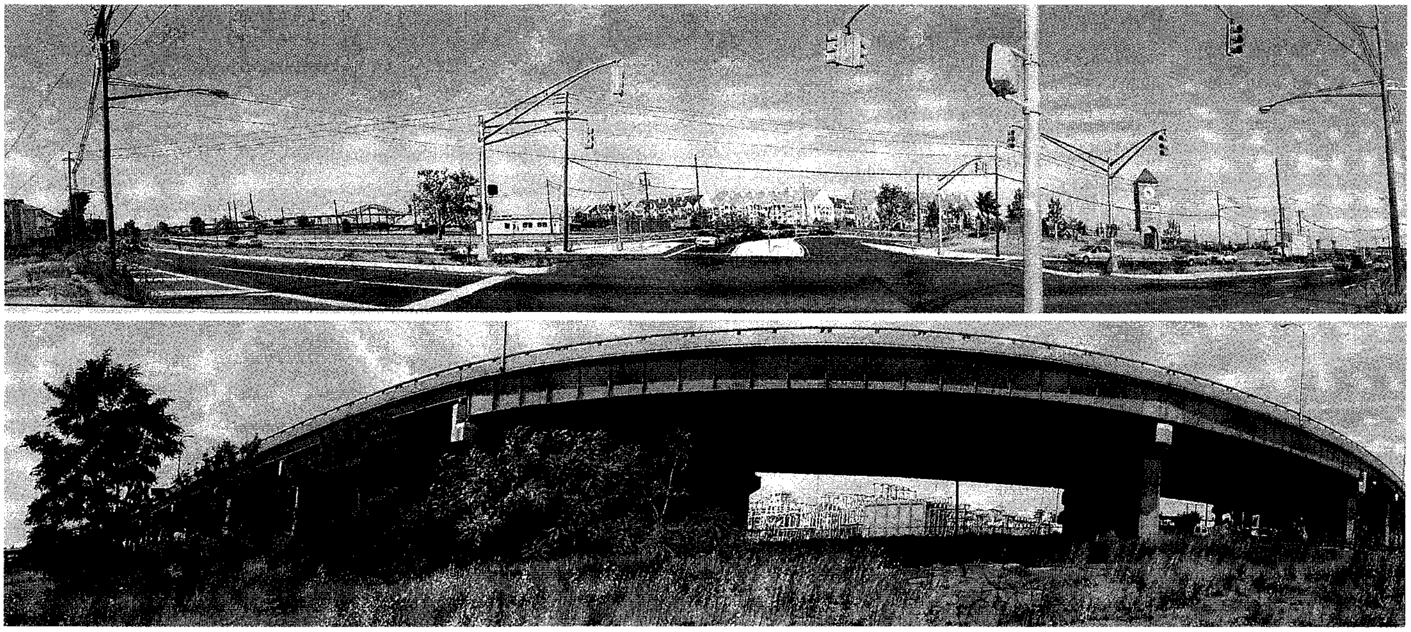
Ash is well played by Byron Jennings, with square jaw and tight mouth to put a vise to shame. There is equally fine work from Jamie Harris, Dermot Crowley, Ritchie Coster, and Sam Trammel; only Dan Futterman lags a shade behind. And David Gallo, fresh from his triumph in *Bunny Bunny,* again scores with his sets. You could do worse than make this *Dealer's Choice* your own.

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

ART **MARK STEVENS**

Peering Into the Void

The English painter Rackstraw Downes takes a hard look between here and there and finds a whole world.



GERTRUDE STEIN'S FAMOUS QUIP ABOUT OAKLAND, California—"There is no there there"—captures the strange, in-between quality of much modern space. Roads, wires, and ditches crisscross the land, utterly transforming it, with no purpose except to connect "here" to "there"; the transitional blur out the car window or around the 7-Eleven is patchy and abstracted, an embodiment of deadened car time. Many writers and artists explore this landscape, of course, but the painter **Rackstraw Downes** does so with a rare and fervent subtlety, confronting, without the usual pop platitudes, both the physical and the metaphysical character of our no-place places.

Now the subject of a show at the Marlborough Gallery that includes thirteen finished oils and sixteen oil sketches, Downes is an Englishman in his late fifties who studied literature at Cambridge and painting at Yale. Since the mid-sixties, he has lived mostly in New York City, rural Maine, and Galveston, Texas. (He has also edited the art criticism of the painter Fairfield Porter.) Wide reading and a keen appreciation for landscape painting before Impressionism—in particular, the work of the early-nineteenth-century English master John Constable—have shaped his outlook. As a result, many people accustomed to the mainstream art of today cannot really see his paintings, viewing them as tasty and old-fashioned. Those people are mistaken.

Downes's paintings are best known for the depiction of long horizontal swaths of space; the painting *Society Hill and Environs in the Drought of '95, Jersey City,* for example, is less than two feet high and more than nine feet wide. Within an elongated space, Downes will usually include more than one "vanishing point." In *Society Hill,* the eye is invited to move straight ahead into the painting, along the road that leads toward a housing development; but the eye is also deflected (partly by the relative nearness of the development) down the highway toward the more distant spaces on the right and the left edges.

The composition in *Society Hill* is further enriched by the jumpy syncopation of the poles and wires. Downes's closest pole, almost in our face, not only defines the foreground but implies an area that the painter does not render, just below and around our car's-eye view. The strong vertical poles make a beautiful contrast with the slow, sweeping arc of the highway, creating a space at once fluid and fixed, loosened and taut, faraway and at hand. Under some spotty clouds in the deep distance, a bridge (made of both arcs and verticals) seems to release the eye from the claims of this particular image.

Unlike most traditional landscape painters, who fashion a fixed perspective, Downes creates a space that we cannot quite possess. He shows how our in-between places slip past. He does not forget the corner of the eye. (He has something in common with the Cubists, who showed the world from different perspectives simultaneously.) In other words, he is not a nostalgic painter dreaming of past verities or organic wholes but one who has actually looked—looked very hard—at the modern landscape. He understands, moreover, that the way we por-

(continued on page 82)

Downes's *Society Hill* (top) and *S-Bend in an Elevated Section of the New Jersey Turnpike.*

Photographs courtesy of the Marlborough Gallery.

CLASSICAL MUSIC **PETER G. DAVIS**

Saintly Strains

'Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien' was once reviled as an ode to a homoerotic sadist; but at the Philharmonic, Debussy's accompanying music shines purely.

A COMPLETELY SATISFYING, EVEN COHERENTLY organized presentation of all the incidental music Debussy wrote in 1911 for Gabriele d'Annunzio's **Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien** is probably unattainable, but conductors keep at it. Désiré-Émile Inghelbrecht became one of the first when he devised a concert condensation of this florid five-act *mystère* in 1914, and many others since have tried to tame the beast. Growing up in Boston in the fifties, I first heard the score when Charles Munch and the local orchestra performed, and recorded, a reduced version with the conductor himself reading a narration in his lilting Alsatian-accented French. In 1962, Leonard Bernstein offered another edition, in English, with the New York Philharmonic, and most recently his successor, Kurt Masur, has made yet another stab. No one, as far as I know, has attempted to stage this strange spectacle in its entirety (more than five hours in length) since the 1911 premiere with the dancer Ida Rubinstein in the title role.

That evening was a famous fiasco, despite the combined talents of D'Annunzio, Debussy, Rubinstein, choreographer Michel Fokine, designer Léon Bakst, and the radiant Ninon Vallin singing the offstage soprano voice of the Virgin. In his indispensable notes to the latest Philharmonic performance, Michael Steinberg quotes the most devastating brush-off of all, which came from Marcel Proust to his confidant, the composer Reynaldo Hahn: "I found the legs of Mme. Rubinstein sublime. . . . For me this was everything." Apparently that was just the beginning for the Archbishop of Paris, who threatened excommunication for any Catholic who attended an extravaganza that, among other outrages, presented a male Christian saint played by a Jewish female dancer who shows her legs. Besides that, the Vatican had already proscribed D'Annunzio's works, and *Saint Sébastien*'s homoerotic, sadomasochistic tone ("Whoever wounds me most deeply loves me the most," Sébastien calls out to the archers before his martyrdom) was hardly calculated to redeem the poet in Rome.

But there is still the music, about an hour's worth written in less than three months—a rush for this meticulous composer, even with the help of André Caplet to fill in orchestrational details. Some claim to hear a lot of Wagner's *Parsifal* in the score, but I suspect that is an aural illusion fostered by Debussy's well-known love-hate for the magician of Bayreuth's last opera, which also offers a seductive mix of sex and religion. There is certainly nothing in Wagner that sounds like the opening measures of *Saint Sébastien,* a fragrant sequence of delicately voiced parallel sixth chords in the woodwinds that, by some alchemy, brings us directly into contact with a world of antiquity as ascetic and austere as it is mystical and sensuous. Indeed, the precise, shimmering sonorities on every page indicate that Debussy had already left the pastel mists of *Pelléas et Mélisande* far behind and was headed into the exquisitely chiseled world of his ballet *Jeux* and the three chamber sonatas.

Despite all the passing musical beauties, any "oratorio" version of *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien* can hardly help but seem a trifle scrappy, even when the sections are glued together with choice bits of D'Annunzio's gaudy, overwrought poetry. In that respect, the Philharmonic's latest presentation succeeded no better than its predecessors, but the musical quality was definitely superior. Masur contented himself with one narrator, Maria Ewing,

Maria Ewing, whooping it up with New York Philharmonic conductor Kurt Masur.

Photograph by Chris Lee.

whose impassioned recitations of the Saint's speeches positively reveled in over-the-top ecstasy. Perhaps a new career as a diseuse is opening up for this singer, now that her severely reduced vocal resources leave her with so few options—even Carl Orff's beery update of Monteverdi's *Lamento di Arianna,* the unnecessary lagniappe that preceded the Debussy, deserved better than Ewing's hooting and scooping. Those looking for vocal beauty could find it in Joseph Flummerfelt's magnificent Westminster Symphony Choir and Elizabeth Norberg-Schulz's limpid soprano, positioned high in the balcony and floating over the audience as a lovely benediction. Firmly guiding his forces and determined to save Debussy's wonderful musical fragments from D'Annunzio's excesses, Masur presided over an orchestral performance that glowed magically in every measure.

THE 92ND STREET Y'S TEN-YEAR **Schubertiade** has just concluded, as originally promised, with a special series of concerts to mark the composer's bicentennial. That much of the original plan has come to pass, along with many unexpected successes and reversals. The idea of presenting the complete Schubert in chronological order collapsed early on and was replaced by thematically unified programs and daylong seminars examining various aspects of the composer and his work. The change in direction was a disappointment, but much superb music-making gave ample compensation—András Schiff's magnificent survey of the complete piano sonatas in 1993 was especially revelatory. The thematic topics have also been stimulating: the changing perceptions of Schubert's character and music through the years since his death, his troubled relationships vis-à-vis Goethe and Beethoven, his possible homosexuality, and, as a finale, a focus on the incredible sequence of works he composed in his last year of feverish activity before dying in 1828 at age 31.

One moving force and unifying element of the Y's Schubertiades, constant from the very beginning both behind the scenes and onstage as a performer, has been Hermann Prey. I recall the baritone remarking half in jest at the opening concerts in 1988 that he hoped to have enough voice nine years later, at 67, to sing the songs of Schubert's final year. I have no doubt that he still does, but Prey, announced as suffering from exhaustion after a tour of the Far East, found himself unable to participate after all—a major calamity, since he was scheduled to sing in four of the six concerts, programs that included the three great song cycles and a re-creation, 169 years to the day, of the only public concert Schubert gave of his own music. As I write, there are still two concerts to go, but the Y's concluding Schubertiade has even survived this final upset and can confidently be termed a success—perhaps even something of a miracle, considering the many musicians who rearranged schedules and rushed in to save the day so that the programs could be kept virtually intact.

James Levine was to have accompanied Prey in the Schwanengesang songs, but instead, he, along with tenor Stanford Olsen, stepped in a week earlier to perform *Die schöne Müllerin*—a generous gesture even for this indefatigable musician, currently in the midst of conducting three Wagner *Ring* cycles at the Met. Olsen's approach to these songs has become more public since I last heard him sing them eight years ago—probably due to all the opera performances that have come in between—and he may want to rethink his generous interpretation before it coarsens any further. Levine's work at the piano, though, continues to be as refined and supportive as ever.

Baritone William Stone and tenor Steven Tharp were deputized for Prey at the opening concert, and both singers, with Brian Zeger at the piano, gave sterling accounts of the lieder that the composer himself had chosen for that original concert on March 28, 1828. The main rewards of the evening, though, were instrumental. The Hugo Wolf Quartet played the first movement of the G Major String Quartet (D. 887) so sublimely that I regretted the historical imperatives that prevented them from offering the rest. In any case, Schubert had planned the E-flat Major Trio (D. 929) as the program's centerpiece, and the Beethoven Trio Vienna gave a bracingly articulate, intelligent, impassioned performance of the rarely heard unabridged edition.

The most singular event was concert No. 4, devoted entirely to *Winterreise,* sung by Mitsuko Shirai with her husband, Hartmut Höll, at the piano. This death-haunted song cycle is usually considered the property of tenors and baritones, although Lotte Lehmann, Christa Ludwig, and Brigitte Fassbaender, among others, have demonstrated that a female voice can sing just as appropriately and eloquently of the pain and delirious heartbreak that drives this music. Indeed, I've never heard these songs presented quite so starkly and without emotional compromise yet still controlled by so much musical concentration and vocal discipline. From her first Y appearance ten years ago, Shirai made it abundantly clear that she was already one of today's major lieder interpreters, and her *Winterreise* has now developed into a shattering statement. For those in need of further proof, the mezzo will be back to give a recital at Alice Tully Hall on May 13. ■

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TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

Templar of Doom

A&E's six-hour 'Ivanhoe' offers bodice-ripping romance, battlefield gore, an evil Templar knight—and too much about the politics of princes.

IN THE HOLLYWOOD VERSION OF SIR WALTER SCOTT'S *Ivanhoe*—this was way back in 1952, the Pleistocene epoch of the Quaternary period of the Cenozoic era of geologic deep-time, when I was 12 years old—the Saxon knight had to choose between a blonde Rowena and a raven-haired Rebecca. It should have been no contest. Rowena may have been a lady, but she was also anemic. Rebecca may have been Jewish, but she was also Elizabeth Taylor. Elizabeth Taylor, about to be burned at the stake by crazy Templars, was such a shock to my libidinal cathexes that I wouldn't recover until Miriam Makeba. That Robert Taylor decided to stay put with Joan Fontaine instead of running off with Liz to Spain told me more than I needed to know about chivalry, feudalism, anti-Semitism, and Clairol. Later that same benighted year, when the American electorate chose Ike over Adlai, I was no longer capable of surprise, and I've been grouchy ever since. Which explains my personal rooting interest in the six-hour mini-series **Ivanhoe** (Sunday, April 20, 8 to 10 P.M.; Monday and Tuesday, April 21 and 22, 9 to 11 P.M.; A&E). Maybe this time they'd get it right.

Well, we do learn more about the office politics of Normans and Saxons. And as a sibling rival to hotheaded, lionhearted Richard (Rory Edwards), Prince John (Ralph Brown) is more interesting than he was in 1952—a slice of Hamlet on wry toast, whose mother never loved him best. And Ciaran Hinds as Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is more ambivalent—if not Jerusalem, why not Rebecca? And the BBC has much more fun than Hollywood did, in a twelfth century distinctly down and dirty, with pigs and hair, mud and mead, bowls of sparrows, boiled mutton and severed heads, bad teeth, guttural grunting, and a royalty not to be distinguished from the rabble it seeks to rouse, all of them meat on a stick. If Robin of Locksley (Aden Gillett) and his Sherwood-chucks could use a Turkish bath, so are the medieval castles in want of indoor plumbing. Between chain mail, noble steeds, carnival tents, bodice-bustings, Red Cross logos, and Shining Path windpipes: vile bodies, bloody oaths, and an occasional leech. Surely, sir, you joust? War is intimate, hand-to-hand, and director Stuart Orme has dragged an army of mercenary extras—the fun-loving clan of the Order of the White Rose—all over wet Scotland to hoot, loot, pillage, and dismember.

But even Steven Wadington's brand-new Ivanhoe, a flaxen-haired Prince Valiant fop who suffers betrothals and betrayals with the same conflicted rictus, will choose Lite Beer Rowena over biblical Rebecca. Talk about your trophy wives! To be sure, there is more spunky Meryl Streep in Victoria Smurfit's Rowena than Joan Fontaine ever dreamt of. But the longer, sensual face of Susan Lynch ought likewise to inspire in an adult male richer fantasies than a baby-talking Kewpie-doll Liz did in 12-year-olds. When Ivanhoe says that nothing went on between him and Rebecca while she was licking his valorous wounds, Rowena doesn't believe him, and I would prefer not to.

There are nevertheless a number of surplus pleasures to be found in this mini-series—swordplay and Templar tantrums; falcons and gluttony; a tough-love Eleanor of Aquitaine (Sian Phillips); as many bonfires as there are vanities. Ronald Pickup plays Waldemar Fitzurse like Dr. Kissinger to Prince John's Nixon. When Richard's Black Knight leads Robin's ragamuffins in a siege of Torquilstone Castle, it's as if Eric Bogosian exhorted Che's guerrillas. To the role of Lucas de Beaumanoir,

A little knight music: Sir Brian (Ciaran Hinds) and Rebecca (Susan Lynch) in *Ivanhoe*.

Photograph by M. Bourdillon/A&E.

Grand Master of the Knights Templar, Christopher Lee brings an amalgam of his signature excesses as Dracula and Fu Manchu. And when, after various abductions, Lynch's smoldering Rebecca quotes psalms at Lee's misogynist anti-Semite, they seem to be arguing about both intellectual-property rights and competing systems of erotic sublimation.

Still, in this postmodern, take-no-prisoners era of parody and pastiche, Günter Grass reworks Grimm, Salman Rushdie sends up Scheherazade, John Barth flimflams Sinbad, and Robert Coover improves Pinocchio. Couldn't some brave soul have rewritten *Ivanhoe* so that the errant knight might decamp with Rebecca to Granada and live happily ever after—at least till 1492?

TO RESURRECT ROD SERLING'S ONLY EXCURsion into macro-history, **In the Presence of Mine Enemies** (Sunday, April 20; 8 to 10 P.M.; Showtime), director Joan Micklin Silver has enlisted the help of Armin Mueller-Stahl (*The Music Box, Shine*), Charles Dance (*Jewel in the Crown*), Chad Lowe (*Life Goes On*), Elina Löwensohn (*My Antonia*), and Don McKellar (*Robocop*). *Enemies* was the last regularly scheduled installment of *Playhouse 90* on CBS in 1960. The excuse for remaking it is the continuing resonance of the 1943 uprisings in the Warsaw ghetto and the fact that CBS omitted the play's last scene. On CBS, *Enemies* ended in ambiguity, in the apartment of Rabbi Adam Heller. In Serling's script, it ended in a shoot-out, in the sewers beneath the city.

Everybody in this new production labors nobly—Mueller-Stahl as the rabbi, opposed to violence; McKellar as his son Paul, fresh from Treblinka, waving a gun; Löwensohn as daughter Rachel, raped by Nazis; Dance as the officer who rapes her; and Lowe reprising Robert Redford's role as a young German sergeant so guilt-stricken he offers to lead Rachel through the sewers out of the city, even as Jews aboveground fight back. That's one of the play's problems: Why should a soldier new to Warsaw know more about its sewer system than citizens who live there?

A bigger problem is rhetorical imbalance. We seem meant to identify with Rabbi Heller, against a son corrupted by hate. But Paul has a righteous point. Instead of exploring a genuine moral dilemma, Serling turns it into yet another frantic pedaling on childhood's Oedipal cycle. And what's even worse is that last scene—no longer, alas, missing. Let's hear it for ambiguity. Better a dumb unknowingness than *Sophie's Choice Meets High Noon.*

EQUALLY NOBLE IS THE STELLAR CAST OF **In the Gloaming** (Sunday, April 20; 9 to 10 P.M; HBO), from a short story by Alice Elliott Dark and a teleplay by Will Scheffer. Robert Sean Leonard returns home from San Francisco to Westchester County and a family—father David Strathairn, mother Glenn Close, sister Bridget Fonda—that doesn't even know how to talk about unimportant things, much less about a son and brother who's dying of AIDS. They need help from the nurse they hire, played, of course, by Whoopi Goldberg. The feature-story hook here is that this drama of a twilight recovery of communications skills has been directed from another room via monitors and headsets, by a paralyzed Christopher Reeve. Reeve, obviously actor-friendly, has elicited deeply felt performances. But *In the Gloaming* is a mockingbird, as in the Gregory Peck movie: a fairy tale in which the victims—of racism or of AIDS—are conveniently on hand to teach the rest of us to behave decently. Thus those well-meaning films from South Africa about anguished and heroic white lawyers and white journalists for whom black suffering is redemptive. Or *Philadelphia*, which was better for Denzel Washington than it was for Tom Hanks.

THE NEW TEAM AT TEN
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POP MUSIC CHRIS NORRIS

Recycling the Future

Apostles of techno—make that, "electronica"—promise us the music of the future. The Chemical Brothers, on a new record, are happy to rock in the present tense.

OF THE HOT NEW MUSIC SENSATION, ONE NAYSAYER sniffs: "It remains popular not because of any virtue in its melodies, harmonies, and instrumentation, nor any novelties in its rhythms, but simply its monotonous beat. It bangs along like a metronome. . . . It might be made just as well by a machine." The music in question is not acid-house, trip-hop, hard-step, or illbient but jazz—the year 1934, the writer H. L. Mencken. But somehow that only makes this quip even more relevant to today's newest bit of trumped-up future shock: "electronica."

With record sales slumping and alternative rock presumed over, the music industry is famously desperate for a new movement to replace its languishing grunge product. And so its gaze has fixed on a vital and international scene of knob-twiddling musicians and colorfully garbed clubgoers—a scene that, when it began in Detroit discos ten years ago, was called techno.

If all goes according to marketing plan, 1997 will be the year "electronica" replaces "grunge" as linguistic plague, MTV buzz, ad soundtrack, and runway garb. The music has been freshly installed in Microsoft commercials, in the soundtrack to Hollywood's recycled action-hero pic *The Saint,* and in MTV's newest, hourlong all-electronica program, *Amp.* The nascent techno-Nirvana, however, still awaits human form.

The strongest candidates are coming from England. Prodigy is electronica's most successful rock emissary, having scored the charging, MTV-friendly single "Firestarter." Underworld, another British band, is also a breakout favorite, having given *Trainspotting* its sonic rush of the new with the dance track "Born Slippy." And then there are the Chemical Brothers, whose debut *Exit Planet Dust* was an alt-rock smash and whose irresistible album **Dig Your Own Hole** (Astralwerks) is out this month. All of these groups face the corporate drive to rock-ify electronica—giving its vocal-less music vocals and its faceless scene a face, and chopping its dance-length grooves into four-minute pop tunes. But the Chemical Brothers are the likeliest not to become cartoons in the process.

The Chemical Brothers are *a brand-new* archetype: post-guitar, post-vocal rock stars.

Since its birth, this self-consciously electronic music—with its pointillist sampling, computer bleeps, and minimalist textures—has subdivided into genres that encompass everything from skittery dance beats to industrial nightmares to moody nocturnes. Meanwhile, its champions' claims for the music have escalated rapidly. Sounding just a bit like Heaven's Gaters, electronica's millennialists proclaim a complete restructuring of how popular music is to be experienced, a utopia where linear song structure is replaced with ambience, pattern, and momentum; the only guitars are in quotes; the only singers are sequenced; and the future begins now in one synthesized beat of the Roland 303. And best of all, it's virtually incomprehensible to anyone over 25.

Musical utopia or not, electronica is one underground movement that actually stands a chance at evading an industry that's become all too efficient at selling kids rebellion before they experience it. The scene's avoidance of videogenic personae and its hairsplitting substyles are, in a sense, sonic warrens, sanctuaries from MTV's maw. And as the grunge-era youth codes have all been cracked by Madison Avenue, we are long overdue for something the Menckens of this era find chilly, monotonous, and machine-made. Electronica is it. At least until businessmen figure out how to sell it.

The Chemical Brothers may or may not be of assistance. Visually, Tom Rowlands and Ed Simons are a schleppy pair of could-be indie-rockers who hide onstage behind machines. But by the power of their music—and of the subliminal coolness suffused by their subculture—the group threatens to forge a brand-new pop archetype: dweebs-with-sequencers, a shadowy nerd cabal behind the beats. The post-guitar, post-vocalist rock star.

Musically, their argument for rock supremacy is even more convincing. Good rock tends to be big and dumb. The Chemical Brothers are good rock. Their use of an Oasis member for their neo-psychedelic single "Setting Sun" is a torch-passing of sorts, because in some crucial ways the Chemical Brothers are—to use the industry's Procrustean schema—the Oasis (if not the Ramones) of electronica: butch formalists unafraid of hooks, hugeness, or pleasure. *Dig Your Own Hole* may be a methodological tour de force—rife with mixing, sampling, and pastiche-crafting virtuosity—but its effect is not ruminative. The moods are aggressive, the BPMs slow enough to defy the subdivision, fast enough to be insistent. In technical terms, it rocks.

It also reveals a philosophy that sets the Chemical Brothers apart from many electronica peers. Rowlands and Simons know that the genuinely radical restructuring of pop meaning, methodology, and authenticity—the huge cultural schism that so many are heralding for '97—happened nearly two decades ago. It was called hip-hop.

Thus *Dig Your Own Hole* is a statement of D.J. supremacy. Although the opus begins with an ominous, *Clockwork Orange*-ish Moog wash, the group quickly moves into party-rocking mode. A plucked electric-bass line kicks in, followed by a sampled hip-hop M.C. saying the title, "Block Rockin' Beats." And then . . . *drums:* cracking, reverbed, all tom-tom rolls and high-hat hiss—it hardly matters that they're sampled. When the sirens and analog synths come in, they're electronic colors in an organic-feeling framework. Sampled appearances by D.J. Kool Herc and rapper Keith Murray underscore the fact that the Chemical Brothers are to classic hip-hop what the Rolling Stones were to the blues—British fans cannily embellishing a distinctly African-American form.

There is much hand-wringing among the electrocognoscenti about whether it's okay to like such a rockist techno album, to endorse such an apparent betrayal of electronica's more oblique, less suburban ethos in favor of a record the rockheads like. Such tribalism is endemic to electronica; but it seems off the point here. Although the "guitars" play no great role in its mix, *Hole* is a gradual, album-long rapprochement with its rock lineage—loud, funky, trancey, and poetic, with four-bar phrases and an actual song, "Where Do I Begin," sung by Beth Orton. Hardly a hip-hop album, certainly not a pop album, and definitely not a determinedly techno one either, *Hole* is simply a grand, muscular soundtrack with its ears in the past twenty years. It's no more anti-rock than recent records by Beck, Moby, Tricky, or the many other premillennial syncretists who use technology as a paintbrush rather than a sourcebook.

Electronica's mass impact, if it has one, will likely be to bring rock tastes toward the faster and dancier, suggesting that the latter part of this century will be remembered as an increasingly rapid oscillation between loud/organic/rock and roll and synth/dance/disco. Electronica, though, is meant—like Communism—to bring an *end* to the dialectic, to usher in the bold new Music of the Future. And like Communism, it will probably fail, especially because electronica's prevailing texture and attitude—which interests the pop marketplace much more than ideas—is subtly but profoundly retro.

Current computer technology is capable of sounds and constructions that are *way* more alien and threatening than the ones favored by the various electronica subsets. In fact, many of these Moog bleeps and cushy synth swells are actually quite comforting to my Gen-X ears, evoking either the early-seventies white-wine soundtracks of Walter Carlos's *Switched-On Bach* or the nightclub scene in *Robocop.* This is a crude oversimplification, but any aesthetic that's based on technology tends to look very campy very soon—like *T2,* morphing, or the *Star Wars* blue screen.

Electronica's legitimately futurist elements tend to be metamusical: how the mostly instrumental music dissolves the already collapsing border between music and cinema, as singer-less videos become independent visions and CDs resemble soundtracks; how the music's affordable equipment provides a digital punk rock; and how the anti-pop forms provide high-concept critiques of media and music.

But the messiahs now proclaiming that electronica signals a truly *musical* pop revolution—of formless, chorus-less, lyric-less electrosymphonies—strike me as every bit the myopic utopians as the postwar serialists, a musical intelligentsia hoping to wipe clean thousands of years of human listening and, in one quasi-Marxist manifesto, reform it along tone rows. Good luck. It's no surprise that one Chemical Brother said that much of their latest record would sound just fine on *Sgt. Pepper's.*

Few things age worse than futurism. In four years—a rock generation—much of this stuff will look and sound as hilarious as the aerodynamic pencil sharpener, the Buck Rogers hair dryer, or the Airstream motor home. Assuming we aren't carried off by Hale-Bopp, electronica's true glory days will be in fifteen years. That's when the chirps, the whooshes, the racing jackets, and the pierced eyebrows will all be finally, blissfully Old School. ▬

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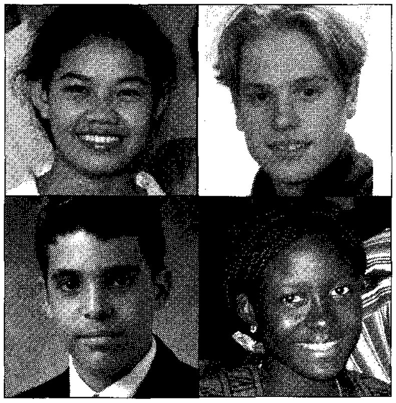

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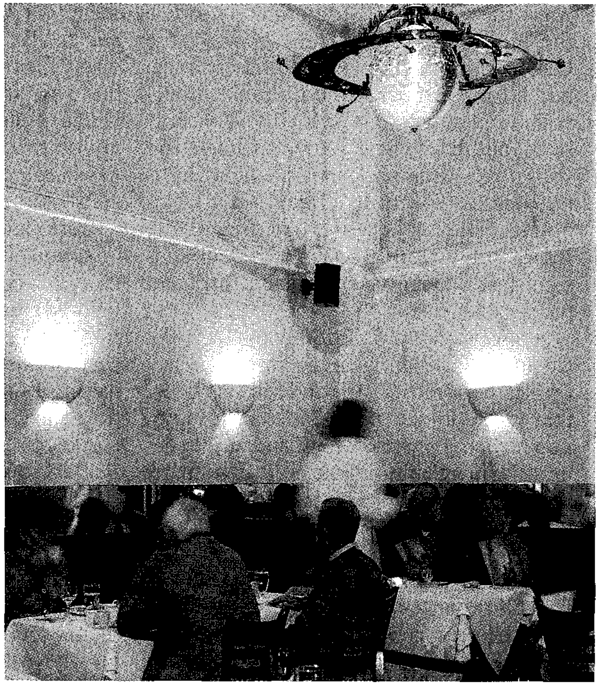
RESTAURANTS **HAL RUBENSTEIN**

Local Joints

With 131 Duane, TriBeCa has a place it can call its own; always a bit of a misfit in the east, Miracle Grill clones itself for the West Village.



SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I STOOD ALONGSIDE MY friend—a gifted and popular chef—dodging workmen spreading Varathane on the floor of the restaurant he was about to open in the Seventies off Madison. "No more of that East Side gold-buttoned-blazer-at-brunch crowd," he said. "I want somewhere locals can fall into, in T-shirts and torn jeans if they feel like. A real neighborhood place."

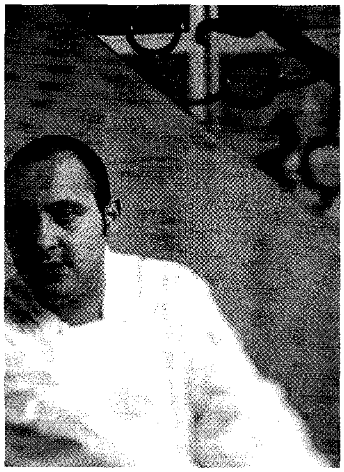
He closed in a year and a half.

If you reside in Manhattan, you live near two kinds of restaurants. The first is marked by the limos out front. It is in your neighborhood in terms of proximity only, relating to its surroundings the way Yankee Stadium does to the South Bronx. The place belongs to the crowds more than it ever will to you.

The second is a place that fits the block like little kids do a sandbox, a restaurant that reflects the area in terms of attitude, comfort, and price. The reason my friend sealed his fate is that he never scouted the territory. You can spot more Ewoks on the Upper East Side than residents in T-shirts and ripped jeans. I've lived there for 26 years. These guys get blazered to go to the Chinese laundry. Neighborhood restaurants fade quicker than cheap carpeting when they fail to be welcome wagons for the area they're supposed to serve.

Until recently, TriBeCa has been a neighborhood with an erratic personality. What **131 Duane** reflects, I think, is an identity in formulation. Take a box of Urban Archaeology grandeur, add a few pieces of Rheinbeck, some falling-down soigné, assemble with a clubhouse laxity, and cover with a sensual overlay of end-of-the-Colonials White Mischief ennui. One-thirty-one is "somewhere the locals can fall into" wearing Costume Homme, Diesel, and Jil Sander knockoffs. (If only the seating arrangements weren't so haphazard. Management: Think banquettes!)

TriBeCa to a T: Chef Johannes Sanzin's 131 Duane makes the natives feel right at home.



Like the brochures at the galleries around the corner, 131's menu seems self-consciously complicated. But as Johannes Sanzin has shown with his first restaurant (Sanzin), his palette is more varied than those of the current crop of fusion chefs. His food is sweeter, denser, his flavor contrasts more syncopated.

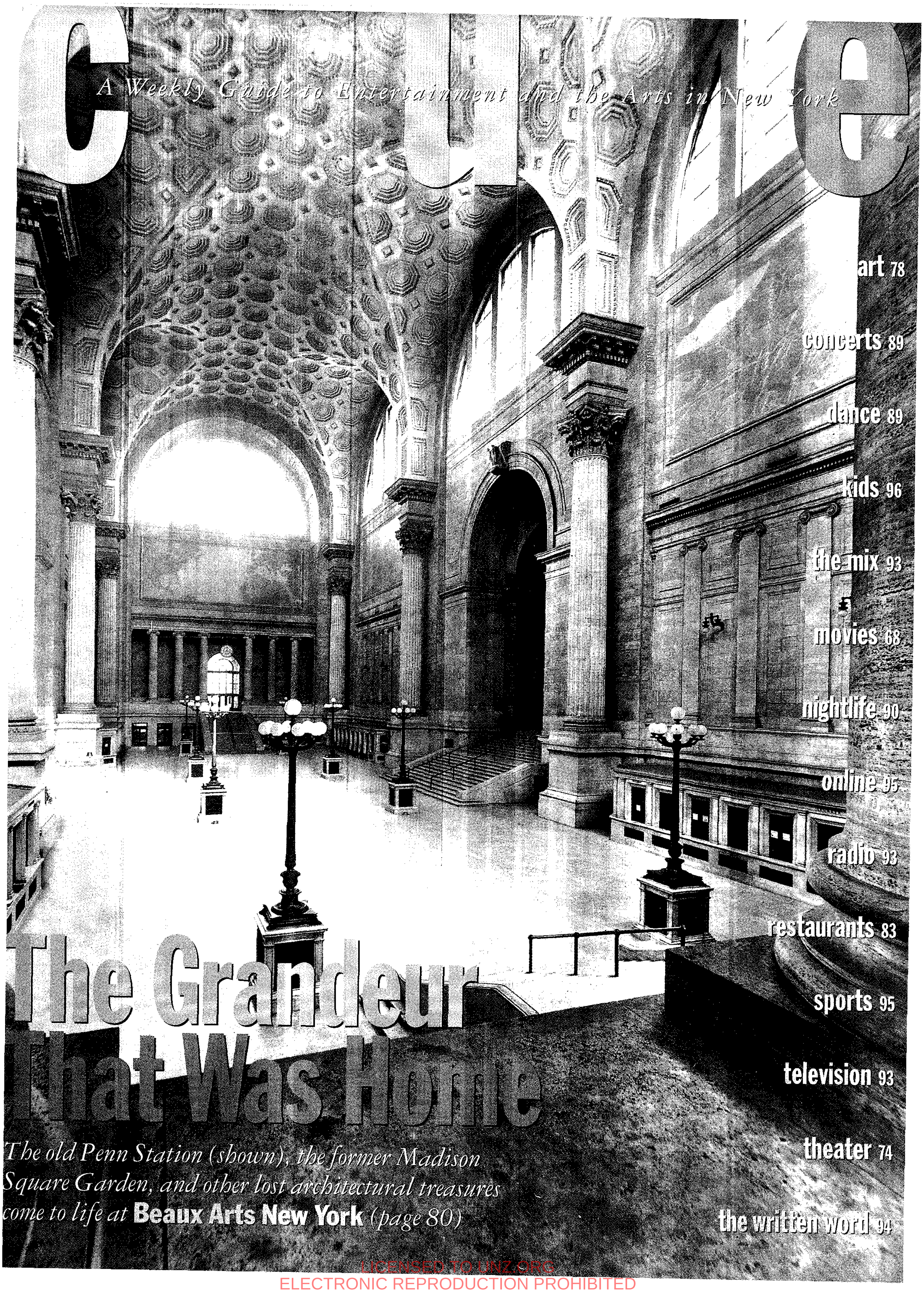
Kumomoto oysters are no bigger than an opal, pleasantly laced with fresh apple and red onion. Since half will be gobbled up by your company, you'll need at least a dozen not to feel deprived. The kohlrabi soup is satisfyingly aggressive, spiked with smoky bits of crayfish. Tingling bass sashimi is deliciously blended with yogurt and serrano peppers, smoothed by cucumber. Brush some of the powerful port-wine sauce off the squab breast—it's too much artillery for the defenseless bird, though its thick syrup enhances the accompanying sweetbreads. Loin of rabbit is light, almost buoyant, but again, the black-truffle vinaigrette is too much—like handling lace with pliers. Foie gras, however, is divine, with a cognac sauce dense as the upholstery at the Viennese opera house.

Several entrées fall victim to an overabundance of flavors. Black bass is beautifully baked but smothered by black trumpet mushrooms and underserved by an insufficient quantity of chive sauce and a potato crust you end up chasing round the plate. The red snapper is adrift in a stormy sea of sun-dried tomatoes, shaved Parmesan, mustard greens, and chive-potato purée. Venison is tame. One would expect Sanzin to go to town here, but the wild-juniper sauce is as timid as Bambi. Rabbit loin is sideswiped by the surprising strength of fig in the sauce. It's a clever combination but begs for balance.

Tuna, however, in a fragrant thyme crust, is a treat with brusque soy-ginger vinaigrette. Monkfish holds its own against a saffron broth with real integrity. Roasted eggplant with braised celery root, parsnips, and cepes betrays no sense of vegetarian-dinner blues—the combination actually makes sense.

You won't find a more superb apple strudel on this side of the Atlantic, and the sour-cherry tartlet could win any county fair. Both are *(continued on page 82)*

Photographs by Steven Freeman.



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The Grandeur That Was Home

The old Penn Station (shown), the former Madison Square Garden, and other lost architectural treasures come to life at **Beaux Arts New York** *(page 80)*

movies

Dracula at MoMA...*Hollow Reed*...Yasuzo Masumura

New Films

Anaconda—A documentary film crew invades the habitat of the world's largest snake, and much trouble ensues. Starring Ice Cube and Eric Stoltz. Directed by Luis Llosa. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Astor Plaza; Gemini; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Plaza Twin; Plaza* .

Anna Karenina—Sophie Marceau stars in this adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's epic. (1 hr. 45 mins; PG) *Angelika Film Center; Paris Theater.*

B.A.P.S.—A comedy about two young, lazy African-American women (Halle Berry and Natalie Desselle) who come up with ill-considered schemes to strike it rich. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Plaza Twin.*

Boys Life 2—Four gay-themed shorts about the trials of adolescence. With Mary Beth Hurt, Vincent D'Onofrio, and Eileen Brennan. (1 hr. 14 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Breaking the Waves—Lars von Triers's bizarre love story about a sheltered Calvinist girl who believes she can make her paralyzed husband walk again by taking other lovers. Starring Emily Watson and Stellan Skarsgard. (2 hrs. 36 mins.; R) *Film Forum.*

Chasing Amy—See David Denby, p. 51. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Square.*

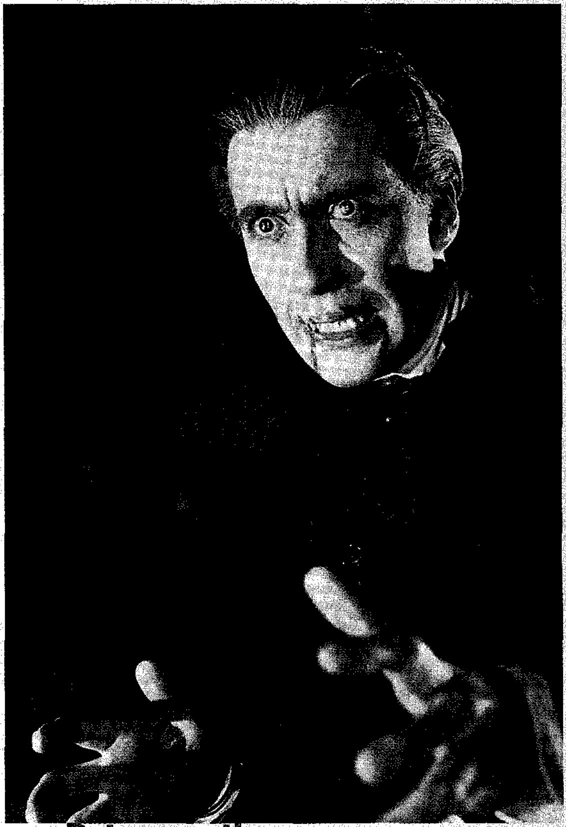
Cosi—A comedy about patients in a mental institution who attempt to mount a production of Mozart's "Cosi Fan Tutte." (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; 62nd and Broadway.*

Crash—The hushed, monotonal characters in this highbrow pornographic movie, directed by David Cronenberg, are neither ghouls nor necrophiliacs, though they certainly get off on death. In the opening scene, Deborah Kara Unger slowly leans forward, stimulating a nipple into erection against a cold, cold surface while getting worked on from behind and below by some man we don't yet know. Later, in bed, Catherine narrates the events to her husband, James Ballard (James Spader), who entertains her with *his* day spent dallying. The two of them use the narrated acts to stimulate their own lovemaking. On the road, Ballard inadvertently crashes into a doctor, Helen Remington (Holly Hunter), whose husband dies in the crash. The two crash victims then meet in the hospital, and thereafter things turn increasingly automotive, what with the couple fornicating awkwardly in the mangled cars and then attending a crash derby in which the man who made love to Catherine—Vaughn, his name is—restages the death of James Dean. Vaughn gets Ballard hooked, and since Ballard wants Catherine to be happy—there's some romantic Tristan-and-Isolde-ish feeling in their linked death wish—the two of them take part in wild rides around town. The sex grows more and more baroque and voyeuristic. This is an extremely controlled piece of filmmaking, without an ugly or discordant shot anywhere. Formally, *Crash* is a triumph. But it's too remote and specialized to be of more than passing interest, and its techno-fetishism is familiar to anyone who has sampled avant-garde fiction over the past 30 years. (1 hr. 40 mins.; NC-17) *Angelika Film Center; Criterion Center; Sutton; Regency.*

Das Boot—The rerelease of Wolfgang Petersen's 1982 action classic. (3 hrs. 30 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII.*

The Daytrippers—See Denby, p. 51. (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**The Devil's Own**—Harrison Ford brings strength and sureness to what would have been an iron role for anyone else—an honest New York cop. His Tom O'Meara doesn't commit violence easily; he's the kind of cop who chases a runaway suspect for blocks. But into his home comes a young man who kills without remorse. Brad Pitt is the IRA assassin and terrorist Frankie McGuire, who saw his father killed when he, Frankie, was only 8, and who believes in nothing but the endless struggle against the British rule of Northern Ireland. Pretending to be an ordinary construction worker, he enters Tom's home and falls in with his happy family and community life. The boy without a father finds a man with two daughters. Many writers, some not credited, worked on the screenplay, and there has been talk in the press of dissension on the set. But for all its alleged troubles, *The Devil's Own* has turned out to be a pretty solid piece of work—Alan J. Pakula's best piece of direction in a long time. An opening gun battle between the IRA and the British in Belfast has the extreme violence and acrid bitterness of longtime enemies engaged in a familiar ritual. The scenes of routine police work in New York—a different kind of war, smaller and less violent but also between familiar enemies—are done with respect for truth and human fallibility. (Denby; 4/7/97) (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square.*



Photograph by Sunset Boulevard/Sygma

Retrospective
Blood Simple

The Museum of Modern Art marks the centenary of Bram Stoker's 'Dracula' with a truly impressive month-long festival. See the definitive (1922's 'Nosferatu'), the cultishly adored (1983's 'The Hunger'), and the unintentionally funny (1975's all-sign-language 'Deafula'), all playing at "CinemaDracula," opening April 17. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for info.)

★**Donnie Brasco**—Set in the late seventies and early eighties, and based on a true story, *Donnie Brasco* catches the mob at a period of confusion and relative decline. These men are not crime lords but thieves and murderers imprisoned by myths that have long since worn out. The ace screenwriter Paul Attanasio has built a wonderful emblematic figure—a new movie icon of failure—out of the mobster Lefty Ruggiero (Al Pacino). Lefty is a longtime hit man, but his authority is now dwindling; he's been repeatedly passed over, and he grumbles like a corporate hotshot who got a corner office when young but somehow never made vice-president. When Lefty meets an outsider, the svelte young jewel thief Donnie Brasco (Johnny Depp), who listens to him and seems to admire him, he warms up to Donnie immediately. Lefty sets about getting the young man accepted into the mob. What he doesn't realize is that Donnie is an FBI agent. At the heart of the movie is the relationship between the two characters, and two actors. Pacino's performance is a beau-

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.

"Cue" cover photograph by Corbis-Bettmann.

tiful piece of work—moving, in part, because it is offered utterly without irony or condescension. Lefty may be a murdering fool, but Pacino knows that even a fool longs for dignity and tries to justify himself. As Donnie, Johnny Depp is very graceful, with a knifelike speed in violent moments. We can believe that the mob might take him for a tough, ambitious young hood—he has the wariness and self-confidence that create an aura. And Depp's emotional reticence works for the role. We can't tell after a while whether Donnie wants to nail these hoods or become one of them. He's in very deep, caught in the stupid but mesmerizing tangle of betrayal and violence. The rubouts, the eroticized power—it beats anything his family, even his wife, can offer. Director Mike Newell doesn't take many risks with the camera, and there are no wild flights, no outbreaks of Scorsesean poetry. But his movie is coherent and emotionally satisfying—a good, realistic gangster film, just when everyone thought the genre was exhausted. (Denby; 3/17/97) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; Lincoln Square.*

Double Team—Jean-Claude Van Damme and Dennis Rodman form an unlikely allegiance as they battle some nebulous bad guys. Directed by Tsui Hark. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Nova.*

★**The Empire Strikes Back**—The second installment in George Lucas's *Star Wars* trilogy. (2 hrs. 7 mins.; PG) *Pavilion Theatre.*

★**The English Patient**—In Italy, in October 1944, the French-Canadian nurse Hana (Juliette Binoche) tends, in his final days, a mysterious "English patient" whose body was horribly burned when he was shot out of the sky by the Germans. The patient (Ralph Fiennes) is actually not English but a Hungarian count. Before the war, Count Almasy had led a party of European explorers and mapmakers in the Sahara—a highly fashionable and educated group, including the crisply articulate married beauty Katharine Clifton (Kristin Scott Thomas). As Almasy lies dying in Italy, he recounts to Hana the story of his passionate affair with Katharine, which brought ruin on everyone. What fuses the separate parts is nothing less than the varieties of love—erotic love, the pleasures of companionship, and even healing as vocation. Fiennes's count is a formal and demanding fellow, witty but not good-humored. As Katharine, Kristin Scott Thomas has a bladelike finesse and strength. She provokes Fiennes, teases his rigid formality, and she is provoked herself, stirred by something proud and romantic in his nature. After a very tense and even wounding dance of flirtation, these two make love, and we can see that the freedom of the screen—so much derided recently—actually means something. (Denby; 11/25/96) (2 hrs. 39 mins.; R) *Village East; 34th Street East; Chelsea; Embassy 2–4; 86th Street; New York Twin; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Gamera: Guardian of the Universe—The adventures of the jet-propelled super-turtle. In Japanese with English subtitles. (1 hr. 36 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

★**The Godfather**—In light of the past 25 years of film history, Francis Ford Coppola's technique seems extraordinarily grave and serious. Every scene is weighted, emotionally significant, resplendent with the thick texture of feeling and history, the heavy presence of air around the characters. The violence, when it comes (after much preparation), is vehement but not excessive, and the coda to some of the most shocking scenes is no more than a mocking smile. Underneath the gravity there is almost an impish sense of humor. This is one masterpiece that borders on comedy and tragedy at the same time. (Denby; 3/31/97) (2 hrs. 55 mins.; R) *72nd St. East.*

Grind—Adrienne Shelley is a young housewife who, bored with the monotony of her daily routine and feeling neglected by her husband, begins an affair with his younger brother (Billy Crudup). Directed by Chris Kentis. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema.*

Grosse Pointe Blank—John Cusack stars as a highly accomplished hit man who, feeling vaguely dissatisfied with his life, decides to attend his high school reunion. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Guild 50th Street; 86th Street East; 84th Street.*

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THE SALVATION ARMY
SHARING IS CARING

Hollow Reed—Martin Donovan stars as a young father who suspects his ex-wife's boyfriend is abusing his son. Directed by Angela Pope. (1 hr. 46 mins.; NR). *Quad.*

Inventing the Abbotts—See Denby, p. 51. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Crown Gotham; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Brooklyn Heights.*

★**Jerry Maguire**— The huge amounts of money they can snag for their clients in multiyear contracts and endorsements drives everyone crazy—and none more so than the great Jerry Maguire (Tom Cruise), who keeps his high clear and pure in a steady stream of winning, adulation, and sex. Jerry, as it turns out, is miserable. He writes a soul-searching memo—a "mission statement"—and distributes it to the entire company, asking that they handle fewer clients and give them more personal attention. Jerry is thrown out within a week. Everyone drops him except for a single client, Rod Tidwell (Cuba Gooding, Jr.), who is a promising pro player but not quite a star. And Dorothy (Renee Zellweger), an accountant from the office, stays with Jerry, too, and falls in love with him. Written and directed by Cameron Crowe, *Jerry Maguire* captures the American whirlwind of success better than anything in recent movies. (Denby; 12/16/96) (2 hrs. 20 mins.; R) *Criterion Center; Gemini.*

Jungle 2 Jungle—Tim Allen plays a New York executive who discovers he has a 12-year-old son living in the jungles of the Amazon. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG) *Embassy 2–4; Pavilion Theatre.*

Kama Sutra—Two women in ancient India—one queen, the other slave—compete for the king's love. Directed by Mira Nair. (1 hr. 54 mins.; NR) *Screening Room; Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Square.*

Kissed—Lynne Stopkewich's dark comedy about a young woman who prefers intimacy with the dead rather than the living. (1 hr. 18 mins.; NR) *Opens Friday.*

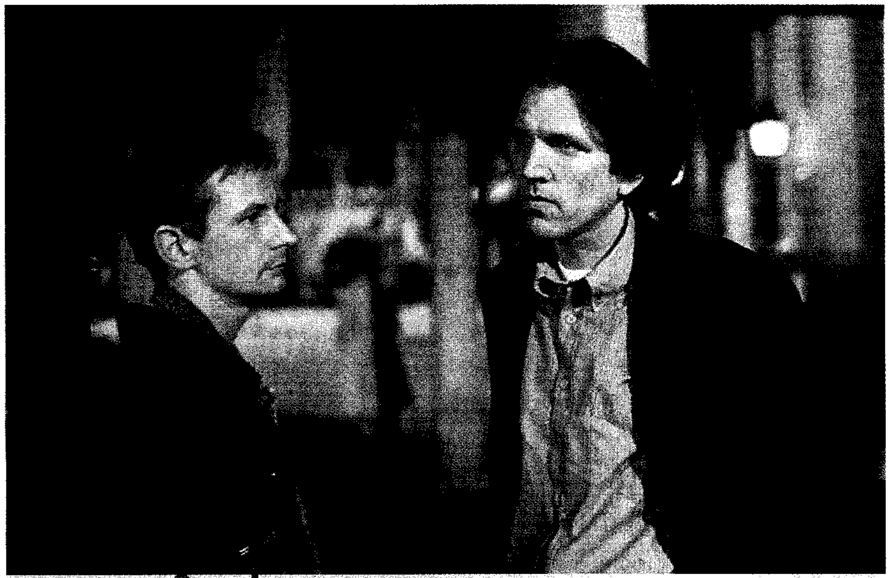
★**Kolya**—The hero of this loving and touching Czech film—set in 1988, only a year before the Velvet Revolution—is Franta (Zdenek Sverak), a man who has lived with dismay for so long that he remains, to the very end, blind to the signs that the Soviets are losing their grip. Completely broke, Franta agrees to marry, for good money, a Russian woman who needs Czech papers. As soon as the wedding comes off, however, Franta's wife flees Prague for a lover in West Germany; she leaves behind a 5-year-old boy, Kolya, who speaks nothing but Russian. The great seducer and eternal bachelor—a man who calls one married woman after another at night, looking for an absent husband— is reduced to giving baths to a lovelorn child he can't speak to. The movie, of course, is a comedy of male selfishness, a Czech version of the Dustin Hoffman-Justin Henry scenes in *Kramer vs. Kramer,* though made with a finer, lighter touch and an absence of obvious sentiment. (Denby; 2/10/97) (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; Murray Hill Cinemas; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Liar Liar—Jim Carrey is a Los Angeles legal hotshot, manipulative and dishonest, who has broken up with his wife (Maura Tierney). His little boy (Justin Cooper), lonely for Dad and often betrayed, makes a wish on his 5th birthday—that Dad be unable to tell a lie for 24 hours. The movie works toward reconciliation: Dad will admit he honestly loves his little boy. Unfortunately, Jim Carrey as a loving dad is more frightening than Jim Carrey as an absent father. He's so demonically demonstrative with young Cooper he nearly eats the kid alive, and Tierney, as his wife, has to hold on for dear life just to establish herself on the screen. Someone has to get Carrey to take it down a notch or two. (Denby; 4/7/97) (1 hr. 26 mins.; PG-13). *Chelsea West; First & 62nd St. Cinemas; Metro; National Theatre; New Coliseum; Lincoln Square; 34th Street Showplace; 86th Street; Waverly.*

Love and Other Catastrophes—The romantic travails of a gaggle of Australian college students. Directed by Emma-Kate Croghan. (1 hr. 16 mins.; R) *Screening Room.*

Love Jones—Larenz Tate and Nia Long play two young singles who have what they think is a one-night stand; then they start to fall in love. Written and directed by Theodore Witcher. (1 hr. 13 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Criterion Center; Plaza Twin.*

Marvin's Room—Diane Keaton and Meryl Streep star as estranged sisters who struggle to reconcile when one is faced with a terminal illness. With Leonardo Di Caprio. (1 hr. 38 mins.; PG-13) *Pavilion Theatre.*



Opening
Dysfunction Junction

In 'Hollow Reed,' Hal Hartley regular Martin Donovan (right) plays a young father who suspects his ex-wife's boyfriend is abusing his son; when he sues for sole custody, he's compelled to make his male live-in lover (Ian Hart, left) move out. The knotty domestic drama, which also stars Joely Richardson, opens April 18 at the Quad.

McHale's Navy—Tom Arnold stars in the big-screen version of the old TV show. Directed by Bryan Spicer. (1 hr. 49 mins.; PG-13). *Opens Friday.*

Paradise Road—Glenn Close, Frances McDormand, and Julianna Margulies star in this fact-based, World War II drama about a band of women who defied their Japanese captors. Directed by Bruce Beresford. (2 hrs.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Beekman; Lincoln Square.*

Pink Flamingos—The 25th-anniversary rerelease of John Waters's ultimate gross-out film, starring the late Divine. (1 hr. 32 mins.; NC-17) *Angelika Film Center.*

Prisoner of the Mountains—A company of armed Russians fighting in the war with Chechnya is ambushed by the rebels; two Russian soldiers survive and are held as prisoners in a Muslim village in the Caucasus Mountains. The older one, Sacha (Oleg Menshnikov), a professional soldier with a devil-may-care attitude, is disgusted by Vania (Sergei Bodrov Jr.), the raw recruit he's stuck with. The village elder, an enormous, fierce-looking man (Jemel Sikharulidze), wants to keep them alive so he can trade them for his son, who is held prisoner by the Russians nearby. In his slight, haphazard way, the director, Sergei Bodrov, captures the rawness, the unpredictability, the stop-and-go violence of war. On the other hand, we don't always know what's going on; some of the sequences seem half-hearted and arbitrary. (Denby; 3/3/97) (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Private Parts—With the help of the writers Len Blum and Michael Kalesniko and director Betty Thomas, Howard Stern has created an effective screen character for himself as a boy and as a young man—Howard the oversized, underdeveloped nerdo thinking dirty thoughts. Stern narrates his life, and the scenes of his childhood are fast, light, and funny in Woody Allen's vignette style. In the movie (but not always on the air), Stern gets away with masochistic jokes by not dwelling on them—one quick moment and then on to the next riff. His early radio career is done swiftly as a series of professional disasters and moral victories. Though he presents his upward surge from obscurity to celebrity as a titanic struggle, he was a big star by the time he was 30 or 31. *Private Parts* becomes painful once Stern makes it big. We are treated as if we were all worshiping fans, fascinated by the assembling of Howard's immortal team (Robin Quivers, Fred Norris, Jackie Martling), and we're supposed to cheer for the team's humiliating anyone who gets in their way. His jeering at ethnics and women has the dull ritual gamesmanship of a guy at a bar going for easy laughs. And in imitation of Stern, the movie plays the same stupid trick on the audience that *The People vs. Larry Flynt* tried to play: It implies that anyone disapproving of its hero is either a religious fundamentalist or a stuffed shirt. (Denby; 3/24/97) (1 hr. 51 mins.; R) *Chelsea; Coronet; Orpheum 7; Pavilion Theatre; Plaza Twin.*

Return of the Jedi—The final installment of George Lucas's *Star Wars* trilogy. (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG) *Chelsea; Manhattan Twin; Ziegfeld; Lincoln Square.*

Romy and Michele's ...—Lisa Kudrow and Mira Sorvino play two slackerish young women who decide to attend their high school reunion in spite of having accomplished nothing. With Janeane Garafolo. Directed by David Mirkin. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R). *Opens Friday.*

Schizopolis—Steven Soderbergh directed and stars in this surreal comedy about a man grappling with issues of identity and reality. (1 hr. 36 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village 12th St.*

★**Secrets & Lies**—At the center of Mike Leigh's great new comedy is a loving but lovelorn mother with two illegitimate daughters. Cynthia (Brenda Blethyn), past 40, is a desperately sweet white woman who has never received much affection from anyone. She gave away her first daughter, conceived when Cynthia was 15, without looking at her, and has lived in a prison of suspicion with the other, Roxanne. The other wing of Cynthia's family is dominated by her heroically amiable brother, Maurice (Timothy Spall), a large and prosperous man who is one of those rare human beings gen-

Photograph by Sophie Baker.

uinely pained by egotism and orneriness in other people. Into this noisy glen of magpies steps Cynthia's other daughter, an elegant, accomplished black woman named Hortense (Marianne Jean-Baptiste). Her adoptive parents have died, and despite her success and evident self-possession, she feels lost. Hortense presents herself to Cynthia, and the discomfort and confusion and anguish that follow are a comic harvest without rival in recent movies. (Denby; 9/30/96) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; 59th Street East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Selena—Jennifer Lopez stars as the late Tejano singer Selena, who was shot to death by the head of her fan club. (2 hrs. 10 mins.; PG) *Village East; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Nova; Olympia Theatre.*

Shine—This much-hyped movie is pretty bad, but you should see it anyway for Geoffrey Rush, the Australian theater actor who plays the real-life pianist David Helfgott, and who turns David's compulsive speech—what psychiatrists call "word salad"—into the very music of the soul. As screenwriter Jan Sardi tells it, David Helfgott suffered through a cramped, driven childhood in the house of Polish refugees who lost their relatives in the Holocaust. The father (Armin Mueller-Stahl), a bearish domestic tyrant, bullies his talented son into winning competitions, then crushes the boy with guilt when he tries to leave home to continue his career. Bent over from fear, skinny and pale, all glasses and big hands, the teenage boy is so spooked that he collapses smack-bang on the piano as he completes a performance of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3. After shock treatment, he winds up in the bin, then makes a long climb back. *Shine* is meant to chronicle the triumph of the human spirit, but it's mostly a crock. Rush, however, is almost giddy from excitement; his performance is the real triumph. (Denby; 12/2/96) (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Brooklyn Heights.*

The Sixth Man—A dead basketball star (Kadeem Hardison) spurs his team to victory from beyond, in this comedy directed by Randall Miller. (1 hr. 44 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Embassy 1; 86th Street East; 84th Street.*

Sling Blade—A mildly retarded young man—who, as a child, slew his mother with a sling blade when he caught her having sex—is released, against his will, from an insane asylum. With John Ritter, Dwight Yoakam, and Billy Bob Thornton, who wrote and directed. (2 hrs. 14 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Carnegie Hall Cinema; 86th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Brooklyn Heights.*

Smilla's Sense of Snow—Julia Ormond stars as an emotionally remote woman who relentlessly investigates the mysterious death of a little boy she had grown to love. With Gabriel Byrne. Directed by Billie August. (2 hrs. ; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Manhattan Twin.*

★**Star Wars**—The early and middle seventies—the time of the *Godfather* movies and great films by Altman, Scorsese, Polanski, and Ashby, the time of De Palma's audacities and a general level of risk-taking, even in the big studios—offered much to anyone eager to believe that film was the great American art form of the twentieth century. Seeing *Star Wars* after those movies was, for some of us, an exhilarating but also unnerving experience. For here was a master showman, George Lucas, working in hyperpop style, without the earnestness about art that we expected from master directors. Lucas sent people running up and down corridors, zapping each other with laser guns; he was obviously reviving, with affection, the cheesy spirit of such Saturday-matinee serials as *Buck Rogers* and *Flash Gordon*. At the same time, *Star Wars* had moments of great natural beauty and its own kind of wit. Obviously it was a super entertainment, but it wasn't art, exactly. It was some highly conscious mutation. In the past twenty years, American big-studio films have become so frivolously pop and so omnivorously commercial that *Star Wars* now seems a model of classical narrative. It tells a story with some feeling for its characters; it has a strong charge of suspense and an epic theme—the search of a boy for his father. It has a touch of mystery, and has retrospectively gained in stature by Lucas's extending the mythical aspects of the story in later parts of the trilogy. What seemed cheesy before—the helmeted lummoxes running up and down corridors, the refuse-dump walls closing in on the heroes—now seems reassuringly human and small-scaled. (Denby; 2/17/97) (2 hrs. 1 min.; PG) *Pavilion Theatre.*

That Old Feeling—Bette Midler and Dennis Farina are a long-divorced couple who reunite at their daughter's wedding. Directed by Carl Reiner. (1 hr. 43 mins.; PG-13) *Waverly; Chelsea; Coronet; National Theatre; Orpheum 7; 84th Street.*

The Saint—See Denby, p. 51. (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) *Art Greenwich Twin; 19th Street East; New York Twin; UA East; Lincoln Square; Olympia Theatre.*

Traveller—A young man (Mark Wahlberg) hooks up with a band of Irish gypsies led by a hardened swindler (Bill Paxton). Directed by Clint Eastwood's longtime cinematographer, Jack Green. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R). *Opens Friday.*

Unforgotten—A documentary about the controversial Willowbrook facility, which housed the developmentally disabled in horrid conditions. Directed by Jack Fisher. (1 hr. 35 mins.; NR) *Angelika 57.*

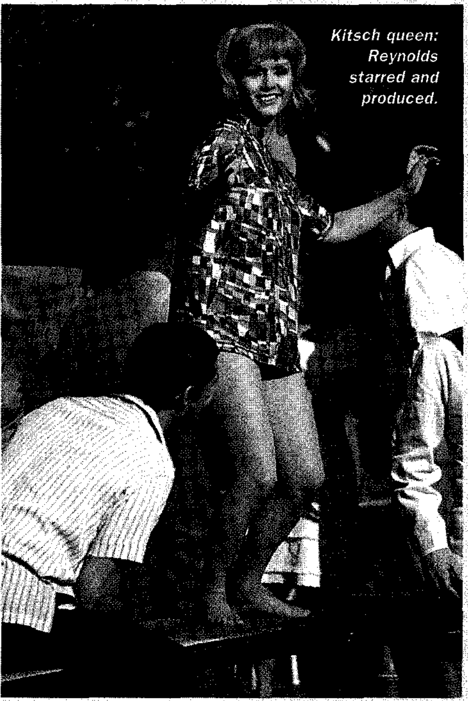
Waiting for Guffman—Christopher Guest stars as Corky St. Clair, a failed stage director who returns to his hometown of Blaine, Missouri, in the hopes of resuscitating his career. With Catherine O'Hara, Fred Willard, and Eugene Levy. Directed by Guest. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Village East; Cinema 3.*

★**When We Were Kings**—In 1974, Don King promoted a world-heavyweight championship fight in Zaire, the famous "Rumble in the Jungle." For the heavily favored George Foreman, Zaire was just a place to earn $5 million, but for Muhammad Ali, fighting to reclaim the title stripped from him when he refused induction into the Army during the Vietnam War, the event was a defining moment. Blacks had left in shackles and returned as champions—that was his mantra, and the American party included James Brown and B.B. King, who were caught up in the same spirit. The young music documentarian Leon Gast went to Zaire to shoot the performance and returned with 300,000 feet of film. After years of struggle, he finally pulled the footage together with help from producer-director Taylor Hackford, who shot fresh interviews with Norman Mailer and George Plimpton, both of whom covered the fight. We see the routine things onscreen—Foreman punching the training bag, Ali taking body blows from his sparring partner—which are brought to life by Mailer's comments. Even people who hate boxing will be held by the intensity of the human drama. Watching Muhammad Ali spin and wheel, we can only mourn the brilliant young man who martyred himself to his love of glory in the ring. (Denby; 2/24/97) (1 hr. 32 mins.; NR) *19th Street East; Carnegie Hall Cinema.*

One-shot Rock Follies

Ludicrously "suggestive" situations; bodies jiggling beneath flimsy costumes; amateur acting and even worse choreography. Anyone who ever complained about eighties heavy-metal videos obviously never saw their even less enlightened predecessor, Scopitones. Shot for cinematic jukeboxes owned by Scopitone, Inc., these sixties filmlets make for tacky, surreal, and—in spite of themselves—immensely entertaining time capsules. "There are levels of weirdness to *all* of them," boasts Dennis Nyback, an aficionado who's assembled 30 of the three-minute, pre-MTV masterpieces for "Scopitone-A-Go-Go" (Cinema Village, April 18–24). Nyback's assessment is a bit of an understatement. From the skimpily clad, cooking-and-cleaning domestic goddesses of "Queen of the House" to the twisting-in-the-woods snowball fighters of "Belles, Belles, Belles," these wackily soft-core scenarios seem specially designed to appall and perplex contemporary viewers. Nyback was first exposed to the clips as demonstration reels for an arcane type of projector and, he says, instantly became fascinated with the raw camp artifacts. Happily, he found his enthusiasm was not shared by the marketplace at the time. Nyback collected the first of his 300 Scopitones a decade ago for $1 apiece; now that the kitsch-happy cocktail-culture renaissance has picked up steam, the films routinely fetch as much as $30. In fact, even Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder, poster boy of the earnest, is reputed to be the proud owner of a Scopitone jukebox. (Which, in a sense, puts him in the lofty company of occasional Scopitone star Debbie Reynolds, who owned the firm that produced the films.) Sadly, though, Scopitone machines will not be making it to your local lounge anytime soon. The company went belly-up in 1969 after one of its principals was indicted in an SEC investigation of Mafia-related financial dealings. Call it the cheesecake coming home to roost.

Ethan Smith



Kitsch queen: Reynolds starred and produced.

Photograph by Ron Thal/Globe Photos.

Woman in the Dunes—Hiroshi Teshigahara's masterly erotic thriller about an entomologist held against his will by a sandpit-dwelling widow. (2 hrs. 7 mins.; NR). *Film Forum.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Anna Karenina; Chasing Amy;, Crash; The Daytrippers; Pink Flamingos; Sling Blade.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Smilla's Sense of Snow; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Cinema Village 12th St—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Schizopolis.*(See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Gamera: Guardian of the Universe; Breaking the Waves.*(See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W.13th St. (255-8800) *Boys Life 2; Grind; Hamlet; Secrets & Lies.*

Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Kama Sutra; Love and Other Catastrophes.*(See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *Cosi; Donnie Brasco; Double Team; The English Patient; Inventing the Abbotts; Kolya; Scream; Selena; Waiting for Guffman.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Anaconda; Das Boot; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; Love Jones; Paradise Road; The Sixth Man.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Liar Liar; That Old Feeling.*

14th-41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Anaconda; Double Team; Grosse Pointe Blank; The Saint; When We Were Kings.*

34th Street East—241 E. 34th St. (505-CINE#586) *The English Patient.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Liar Liar.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Cosi; The Devil's Own; The English Patient; Inventing the Abbotts; Paradise Road; Private Parts; Return of the Jedi; Scream; The Sixth Man; Sling Blade; That Old Feeling.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Liar Liar.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Kolya; Sling Blade.*

42nd-60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Secrets & Lies.*

Angelika 57—225 W. 57th St. (586-1900) *La Cérémonie; Unforgotten.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway. and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Anaconda.*

Carnegie Hall Cinema—887 Seventh Ave., bet. 56th and 57th Sts. (505-CINE#593) *Sling Blade; When We Were Kings.*

Cinema 3—2 W. 59th St. (505-CINE#596) *Waiting for Guffman.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Chasing Amy; Grosse Pointe Blank; Shine.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Private Parts; That Old Feeling.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Crash; The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Double Team; Jerry Maguire; Love Jones; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Inventing the Abbotts.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Kama Sutra.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *The Sixth Man.*

Embassy 2-4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *The English Patient; Jungle 2 Jungle; Scream.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Grosse Pointe Blank.*

Manhattan Twin—220 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#590) *Return of the Jedi; Smilla's Sense of Snow.*

National Theatre—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *Liar Liar; That Old Feeling.*

Paris Theater—4 W. 58th St. (980-5656) *Anna Karenina.*

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *The Godfather; Inventing the Abbotts; Selena; The Saint.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *Crash; Scream.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Dante's Peak; Fargo; First Strike; Ghosts of Mississippi; The Relic; Touch.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Return of the Jedi.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

68th Street Playhouse—1164 Third Ave., at 68th St. (734-0302) *Cosi.*

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *The Godfather.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *The English Patient; Liar Liar.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Grosse Pointe Blank; The Sixth Man; Sling Blade.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *Paradise Road.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Liar Liar; Double Team; Kolya; Sling Blade.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Jerry Maguire.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *The English Patient; The Saint.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (876-2400) *Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Double Team; Inventing the Abbotts; Private Parts; Selena; That Old Feeling.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *The Saint.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *Cosi.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Anaconda; Double Team; Grosse Pointe Blank; Scream; The Sixth Man; That Old Feeling.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *The Daytrippers; The English Patient; Kolya; A Mongolian Tale; Prisoner of the Mountains; Secrets & Lies.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Liar Liar; Chasing Amy; The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Inventing the Abbotts; Kama Sutra; Paradise Road; Return of the Jedi; Selena; The Saint.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *Liar Liar; Double Team.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; Double Team; Selena.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Anaconda; Double Team; Selena.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Selena; The Saint.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Crash.*

Opening
Ladies of Leisure

The last of the Friends to try the leap to the big screen, Lisa Kudrow (left, with Mira Sorvino) stays comfortably close to her dizzy TV persona in *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion.* As two slackerish party gals inspired by the prospect of attending their tenth reunion, Kudrow and Sorvino invent spectacular personal histories; trouble appears in the form of Janeane Garofalo, as the acerbic classmate who remembers them best. Opens Friday.

Photograph by Mark Fellman/Touchstone Pictures.

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; B.A.P.S.; The Devil's Own; Double Team; Love Jones; Scream; Selena; The Sixth Man; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; B.A.P.S.; The Devil's Own; Double Team; Selena; The Sixth Man; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Riverdale Twin Theatre—5683 Riverdale Ave., at 259th St. (884-9514) *The Devil's Own; The Saint.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Liar, Liar; Anaconda; B.A.P.S.; The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Double Team; Love Jones; Scream; Selena; The Sixth Man; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Liar Liar; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; Inventing the Abbotts; Scream; That Old Feeling; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Inventing the Abbotts; Shine; Sling Blade.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; Double Team.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Liar, Liar; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; Kolya; The Saint.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Anaconda; Double Team; Selena; The Sixth Man; The Saint.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; Double Team; The Sixth Man.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Anaconda; Double Team; The Saint.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Anaconda; B.A.P.S.; Double Team; Jungle 2 Jungle; Scream; Selena; The Sixth Man.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Liar Liar; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; Inventing the Abbotts; The Saint.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; Double Team; Scream; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn (369-0838) *The Empire Strikes Back; Jungle 2 Jungle; Marvin's Room; Private Parts; Star Wars.*

Plaza Twin—314 Flatbush Ave., nr. Eighth Ave. (636-0170) *Anaconda; B.A.P.S.; Love Jones; Private Parts.*

Ridgewood—55–27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *Anaconda; Double Team; Selena; The Saint.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Grosse Pointe Blank; Inventing the Abbotts; Private Parts; Selena; That Old Feeling; The Saint.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28–60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Liar, Liar; Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Scream; Selena; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Bay Terrace—211–01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *The Devil's Own; The English Patient; Grosse Pointe Blank; Jungle 2 Jungle; Scream; Selena; Sling Blade; That Old Feeling.*

Cinema City—183–15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Anaconda; Double Team; Scream; Selena; The Sixth Man.*

Cinemart—106–03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Jungle 2 Jungle; Private Parts; The Saint.*

Continental—70–20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Anaconda; The English Patient; Inventing the Abbotts; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Crossbay—94–11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Double Team; Love Jones; Selena.*

Crossbay II—92–10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; B.A.P.S.; Donnie Brasco; Grosse Pointe Blank; Scream; The Sixth Man; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Elmwood—57–02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Donnie Brasco; Double Team; The Sixth Man; The Saint.*

Forest Hills—107–16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *The Devil's Own; That Old Feeling.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Liar Liar; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; Inventing the Abbotts; That Old Feeling; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Liar Liar; Double Team; Selena.*

Midway—108–22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Liar Liar; Jerry Maguire; Return of the Jedi; Scream; Selena.*

Movieworld—242–02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; Inventing the Abbotts; That Old Feeling; The Saint.*

North Shore Towers—27–10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Sling Blade; Private Parts.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Liar Liar; Anaconda.*

Quartet—160–06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) *The Devil's Own; Double Team; Scream; Selena; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

The Movies at Bayside—38–39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; Inventing the Abbotts; The Saint.*

Trylon—98–81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *Grosse Pointe Blank.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Grosse Pointe Blank; That Old Feeling; The Saint.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Double Team; The Saint.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Liar Liar; Anaconda; The Devil's Own; Donnie Brasco; Grosse Pointe Blank; Inventing the Abbotts; Scream; Selena; The Sixth Man; That Old Feeling; The Saint; Turbo: A Power Rangers Adventure.*

Retrospective

Company Man

In 1958's 'The Build-Up' (starring Hiroshi Kawaguchi, Hideo Takamatsu, and Hitomi Nozoe, above), the late Japanese director Yasuzo Masumura skewered the soulless corporate animal, to the point of making actors speak in robotic, rat-a-tat rhythms. That film, along with fourteen others—most of which shocked fifties Japan with their depictions of sexually insatiable women—will be screened during the first-ever U.S. Masumura retrospective, at the Japan Society. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for info.)

Photograph by Daiei, Co., Ltd.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Humphrey Bogart." 4/19: *Key Largo* (1948) and *In a Lonely Place* (1950). 4/20: *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948) and *The African Queen* (1951). 3601 36th St., Astoria, Queens (entrance on 35th Ave.; 718-784-0077); $8.

Anthology Film Archives—"Luis Buñuel." 4/14: *Daughter of Deceit* (1951) and *The Daughter of Juan Simon* (1935). 4/15: *Don Quintin El Amargao* (1935) and *Republic of Sin* (1959). 4/16: *Gran Casino* (1946) and excerpts from films edited by Buñuel. 4/16 and 4/17: *The Phantom of Liberty* (1974). 4/17: *The Golden Age* (1930) and *An Andalusian Dog* (1928-9). Also, 4/15, 4/17, 4/19, and 4/20: Lars von Triers's *The Kingdom* (1994). 4/14, 4/19 and 4/20: Jean-Luc Godard's *JLG Par JLG* (1994) and *2 x 50 Years of French Cinema* (1995). 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181); $7.

Cinema Village 12th St—Beginning 4/18: "Scopitone A Go Go." Call for program info. 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363); $8.

A Different Light—4/20: *The Party* (1968). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—4/17: *The Yellow Submarine* (1968). 4/17 and 4/19: Award-winning film and video from the Black Maria Film & Video Festival. 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Forum—*Woman in the Dunes* (1964). 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); $8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater)—"Danish Cinema Then and Now: Dreyer, von Trier, and Beyond." 4/15: *The Boys From St. Petri* (1991) and *The Eighteenth* (1996). 4/15 and 4/18: *Pusher* (1996). 4/17–4/19: *Karen Blixen: Storyteller* (1995). 4/18 and 4/19: *Hamsun* (1996). 4/19: *Søren Kierkegaard* (1994). 4/20: *Images of Relief* (1982) and *The Kingdom* (1995). "Movies for Kids." 4/19 and 4/20: *Otto is a Rhino* (1983). 65 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600); $8.

Goethe-Institut New York—Through 4/30: A documentary exhibit by the Heinrich Boll Foundation. Call for program info. 1014 Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (439-8700); free.

Japan Society—"Yasuzo Masumura Retrospective." 4/18: *Kisses* (1957). 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); $7.50.

Museum of Modern Art— "Gila Almagor: Israel's First Lady of the Cinema." 4/14: *Magic* (1994) and *Siege* (1969). 4/15: *Life According to Agfa* (1992) and *The House on Chelouche Street* (1973). 4/17: *Passover Fever* (1995). "CinemaDracula." 4/17: *Vampir* (1970), *L'Hydre d'eau douce* (1914), *Le vampire* (1939–45), and *Nosferatu, Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (1922). 4/18: *Horror of Dracula* (1958). 4/18 and 4/20: *Dracula* (1931) and *Dracula*, Spanish-language version (1931). 4/19: *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948), *Son of Dracula* (1943), and *Dracula's Daughter* (1936). 4/20: *El Vampiro* (1958). "Lubitsch in Paris." 4/18: *So This is Paris* (1926). 4/19: *Ninotchka* (1939) and *The Love Parade* (1929). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); $8.

Screening Room—Sunday brunch: *Singin' in the Rain* (1952). 54 Varick St., below Canal St. (334-2100); $8 ($5 for brunch patrons).

Symphony Space—"Golden Voices/Silver Screen," with live cabaret keyed to the movie. 4/15: *An American in Paris* (1951). 4/22: *Carmen Jones* (1954). 2537 Broadway (864-5400); $8.

theater

David Ives x 6...Woodward Directs Odets

Broadway

Previews and Openings

An American Daughter—Wendy Wasserstein's new political comedy, starring Hal Holbrook and Kate Nelligan. $35–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/13 opening. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Candide—Voltaire with a Leonard Bernstein beat. Hal Prince revives this musical satire, starring Jim Dale, Andrea Martin, Harolyn Blackwell, and Jason Danieley. $20–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/29 opening. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St.(307-4100).*

The Gin Game—Julie Harris and Charles Durning star in D. L. Coburn's Pulitzer Prize–winning analysis of life as card game. $15–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/20 opening. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—What do you think it's about? Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, score by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/28 opening. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St.(239-6200).*

The Life—A contemporary street opera set in eighties Times Square. Music and lyrics by Cy Coleman and Ira Gasman; book by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. In previews for a 4/26 opening. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St.(239-6200).*

The Little Foxes—Stockard Channing stars in Lillian Hellman's 1939 play, in a role made famous by Bette Davis on screen; directed by Jack O'Brien. $35–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/27 opening. *Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center (239-6200).*

London Assurance—Brian Bedford stars in Boucicault's nineteenth-century comedy of manners—courtship, fortunes, and fancy dress. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 4/30 opening. *Roundabout Theatre's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (869-8400).*

Steel Pier—Think Atlantic City, not Altman-style but 1933: dance marathons, lovebirds, and cotton candy. A new musical by Kander, Ebb, and Thompson, starring Gregory Harrison, Karen Ziemba, Daniel McDonald, and Debra Monk. $35–$75. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. After 4/13: Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/24 opening. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Titanic—Go down with the ship, directed by Richard Jones. $45–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/23 opening. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St.(307-4100).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Previews

Strange Sextet

David Ives is back at Primary Stages with the singularly daffy form that brought him fame: six one-acts, each more ridiculous than the last. In 'Mere Mortals and Others,' Ives manages to demystify Mamet, sexualize mini-golf, and mate a pair of short-lived mayflies.

Now Playing

Annie—Nell Carter stars as Miss Hannigan in this twentieth-anniversary production of everyone's favorite orphan musical. $40–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 1 and 6, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/26/97. *Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Barrymore—William Luce's play gives you a chance to experience Christopher Plummer, the greatest living actor in the English language. It is a quasi monodrama in which the legendary thespian, a month from his rendezvous with death, prepares to put on *Richard III* once more. Sometimes he spars with his unseen, sardonic prompter in the wings (well intoned by Michael Mastro); for the rest, he gloriously indulges himself. He does stagger through a pungent bit of Richard; mostly, though, he sings popular ditties, recites risqué limericks, executes a few dapper dance steps, tells racy anecdotes, impersonates his siblings Lionel and Ethel, delivers snatches of *Hamlet* and other Shakespeareana, banters with the audience, and relives his soaring and plummeting career, his glamorous and clownish life (Simon: 4/7/97). $25–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/25/97. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Kerry Butler plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costume design by Ann Hould-Ward; lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. $22.50–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Bring In 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning meditation on the pre-Hollywood ethnic roots of tap dancing. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Dark Thurs. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Ann Reinking is suavely slinky with a demureness that oozes sex; Bebe Neuwirth does a scissors kick or two while maintaining her come-hither brand of snootiness. And James Naughton doles out dearly bought legal strategy like alms to an importunate beggar. Minimalism prevails. All is concise, calibrated, calculated, but nothing is stinted on. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. If Chicago in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Also starring Joel Grey. (Simon: 12/2/96) $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

A Doll's House—A startling new version of Ibsen's 1879 scenes from a marriage by Frank McGuinness. Starring Olivier Award winner Janet McTeer. $25–$60. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/2/97. *Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Dream: The Johnny Mercer Musical—The Golden Age of American pop music, set to songs by Mercer, Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and many more, written between 1920 and 1960. Starring Lesley Ann Warren, Margaret Whiting, and John Pizzarelli. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/3/97. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St.(239-6200).*

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum—A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring Whoopi Goldberg as a female Pseudolus. $60–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 20 mins.*

Grease!—It's back, after a brief hiatus. A crowd-pleasing, neon-heavy rock-and-roll musical about a group of high-school seniors in 1959. Book, music, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; directed and choreographed by Jeff Calhoun. Olympic gymnast Dominique Dawes joins the cast as cheerleader Patty Simcox, and Joe Piscopo plays D. J. Vince Fontaine. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened:

Photograph by James Leynse.

5/11/94. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins*

The King and I—Along with Lincoln Center's recent *Carousel* and the recent Broadway production of *State Fair,* the Rodgers and Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with their famous musical adaptation of the memoir *Anna and the King of Siam,* featuring contemporary heartthrob Lou Diamond Phillips (un-bald) in the role created by Yul Brynner. Faith Prince stars as Anna. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—Alfred Uhry's first new play since *Driving Miss Daisy,* set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind.* $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (307-4100).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. Who but Hugo could have dreamed up the wonderfully mad idea that Valjean, releasing the fanatical Javert delivered into his hands, would by his magnanimity drive the cop to suicide? In this revamped tenth-anniversary production, Robert Marien is not the overwhelming Valjean Colm Wilkinson was. Instead, he grows on us: an ordinary fellow whose evolving humanity attains the sublime. The lone major holdover, Christopher Innvar is a riveting Javert, making implacable righteousness rightly repellent (3/31/97). $15–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

Master Class—In the early seventies, opera star Maria Callas took her diva persona from stage to classroom with a celebrated series of tutorials for young hopefuls. Slightly fictionalized, they're the subject of Terrence McNally's newest play, starring Dixie Carter as the great *monstre sacré* herself. $32.50–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly,* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, has just celebrated its fifth anniversary on Broadway. Score by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2; dark Sun. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Once Upon a Mattress—Sarah Jessica Parker plays the oversensitive royal in this musical version of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Princess and the Pea.* For insomniac luxury-lovers of all ages. $40–$75. Thurs. and Fri. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened 12/18/96. *Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—In its ninth year on Broadway, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, passing the 3,200-performance mark recently and edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. And strangely—or wisely, depending on your point of view—it's no nearer to becoming a movie than on the day it opened. $15–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Play On!—Songs by Duke Ellington, plot by William Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night*), and a setting in prewar Harlem. Written by Cheryl L. West; conceived and directed by Sheldon Epps. $40–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/20/97. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (307-4100).*

Present Laughter—A clever fellow, this Scott Elliott, but now he has gone too far. The director has taken Noel Coward's sleek, sophisticated comedy and staged it as the crassest farce. Garry Essendine, the fey, egocentric, matinee-idol hero, is doubtless modeled on the author himself, but Coward never fully emerged from the closet. It is not for Elliott to out one of his plays. Here the women are made shriller, sillier, or more predatory than called for, the men more effete, narcissistic, overtly homosexual. Frank Langella does ample justice to Elliott's Essendine: One wonders what he could have done with Coward's. (Simon: 12/2/96) $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/18/96. *Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types living in the East Village. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. You don't like crazy music? (We keep forgettin'.) Don't feel that way; baby, that is rock and roll. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Have a drink and dig the band. Can't you hear the flügelhorn? Can't you hear the bell? Come to them sickly, they'll make you well. We don't know why our heart flips (and, baby, we don't care); we only know it does. Heartbreakin' nights, only in America. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $35–$70. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Stanley—Either at the $10 membership rate or even at the $45 full price, this is a real bargain. The staging is infinitely inventive, the production design compellingly offbeat, the lighting innovative. The only thing missing is a play above the boulevard level, something the author, Pam Gems, has never been able to deliver. The distinguished British actor Antony Sher easefully conveys everything one has ever read about Spencer in a performance of boundless energy, naturalness, and charm. He is both satyr and pixie, visionary and child, buoyer-up and pain in the butt. Praise be to Gregory Mosher, the new producing director, who has infused the moribund Circle in the Square with such pulsating life (Simon: 3/3/97). $10–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/20/97. *Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200).*

Victor/Victoria—Reprising her title role in husband Blake Edwards's 1982 film, Julie Andrews—returning to the Broadway stage for the first time since the early sixties and *Camelot*—struts her stuff in (the late) Henry Mancini and Leslie Bricusse's musical adaptation of Mr. Edwards's comedy of sexual manners. "One way or another, *Victor/Victoria* will make history. Like a karaoke record, it's got everything minus one: a true star, a solid cast and ensemble, savvy staging and choreography, lush scenery and costumes and lighting, a funny (or at least doggedly farcical) book—everything but one really good song. This will be the test: Can a Broadway musical make it without a score? Julie Andrews has a look, voice, and personality that live in perfect harmony with one another, whether she is singing, dancing, acting, or just being. Still, *Victor/Victoria* may be the best unmusical musical you are ever going to see." (Simon; 11/6/95.) With Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York; written and directed by Mr. Edwards. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis, 1535 Broadway (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Young Man From Atlanta—There's good down-home, Southern-fried atmosphere at the Houston house of Will and Lily Dale Kidder, but where the hell is the play? Playwright Horton Foote's idea is good. You take a Southern couple—the seasoned businessman Will Kidder and his artistic but infantile wife, Lily Dale—and saddle them with the untimely death of their 37-year-old son, Bill. Was it an accidental drowning, or was it, as it turns out, suicide? And could this have had something to do with Bill's excessive closeness to his roommate, Randy, a layabout to whom he kept signing over the generous allowance his father, Will, was steadily sending him? Suicide and homosexuality in 1950 Texas—a society that barely admits the former, and wouldn't even utter the name of the latter. Rip Torn, terrific when he plays disturbingly shady characters, must here keep reining himself in. Shirley Knight is stuck with the hard task of making a stupid woman lovable, which would tax a much better actress. Once again, the Pulitzer has gone to bogus profundity (Simon: 4/7/97). $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/27/97. *Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Off Broadway

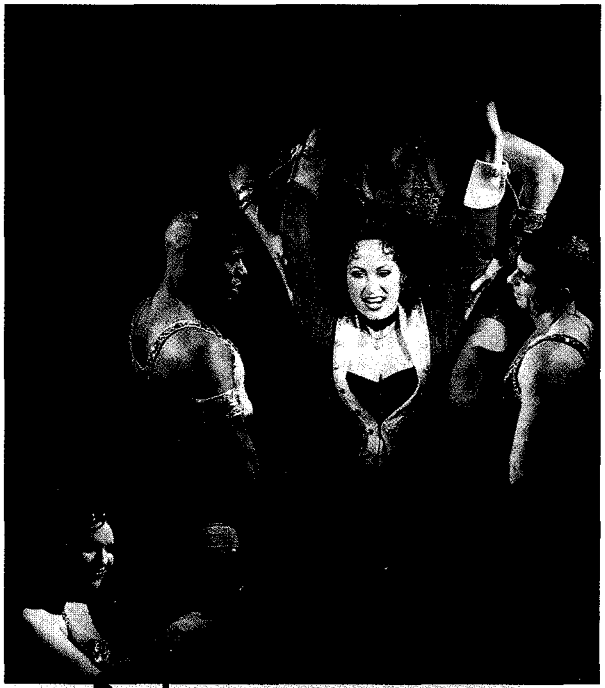
Previews and Openings

All My Sons—A fiftieth-anniversary production of Arthur Miller's classic, starring John Cullum and directed by Barry Edelstein. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 5/4 opening. *Laura Pels at the Roundabout, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (869-8400).*

Bermuda Avenue Triangle—Sex and other scandalous behavior in an exclusive retirement community. By Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna; starring Nanette Fabray. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opens 5/11. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Corn—A country-and-western musical by Charles Ludlam, originally produced in 1972. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. In previews for a 4/15 opening. *Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (307-4100).*

Curse of the Starving Class—The Signature Theatre Company's Shepard season closes with this 1978 drama about a family, and a country, in decline.



Previews
Dark Angel

Recent films have turned Robert Louis Stevenson's pulpiest novel into antic comedy, with slapstick appearances of the lady, or lady-killer, within the man. The new musical version of *Jekyll & Hyde* suffers no such revisionism, giving the good doctor the truly horrifying alter ego he deserves.

Photograph by Cylla Von Tiedemann.

$25. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/27 opening. *The Public/Susan Stein Shiva Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

The Green Heart—Charles Busch and Rusty Magee's new horticultural-themed musical, set in the romantic environs of the potting shed. $30–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. Opened: 4/9/97. *Manhattan Theatre Club, Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (239-6200).*

The Gypsy and the Yellow Canary—Irene Worth adapted and stars in this theatrical version of Prosper Mérimée's tale of obsessive love. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews. *The Public/Martinson Hall, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

Hate Mail—*Love Letters* with a sarcastic, vaguely sadistic twist, starring Joanna Adler and Joey L. Golden. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. 4/2–5/4. *Selwyn Theater, 229 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

The Invisible Man/The Nightingale and Not the Lark—Two one-act plays by Jennifer Johnston. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/13/97. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Mere Mortals and Others—David Ives presents six one-acts, ranging from Mamet to mini-golf to mayfly mating rituals. $33–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun at 3. Opens 4/29. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Sympathetic Magic—A new play by Lanford Wilson, centering on a contemporary couple and some difficult life decisions. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun at 2 and 7. Opens 4/16. *Second Stage Theatre, 2162 Broadway at 76th St. (873-6103).*

Waiting for Lefty—Joanne Woodward directs the Blue Light Theatre Company's revival of Clifford Odets's Depression-era workers' play. Marisa Tomei stars as one of the disenfranchised. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 8, Sun. at 4 and 7. In previews for a 4/19 opening. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (279-4200).*

The Young Girl and the Monsoon—A new play by James Ryan, starring Michael O'Keefe, about the difficult live of a divorced dad. $15. Tues.–Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 2 and 7:30, Sun. at 2 and 7. In previews for a 4/27 opening. *Playwrights Horizons Studio Theater, 416 W. 42nd St. (279-4200).*

Previews

Lady Of Candide

In the new revival of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* (previewing April 19, see listings), Harolyn Blackwell has one of Broadway's true showstoppers. As Candide's lover Cunegonde, swathed in organza and dripping rhinestones, the opera singer scenery-chews her way through the hysterical meltdown "Glitter and Be Gay." The song is a deeply ironic pep talk—with lines like "[I'll] show my noble stuff by being gay and reckless"—that ends by sending up nearly every other shrill, wailing emotional paroxysm in opera history. "Imagine," says the sweet and surprisingly diminutive Blackwell, "getting to rip off all your jewels and go mad with wicked laughter!" Sounds like fun. But while the rest of us can only enjoy such diva moments in private, Blackwell has had a career of them. A lifelong devotee of *West Side Story,* Blackwell was hand-picked—fresh out of college, by Bernstein himself—to sing "Somewhere" in that show's 1980 Broadway revival. Years later, when the notorious prima donna Kathleen Battle was fired from the Metropolitan Opera, Blackwell was given the starring role in their 1994 production of *The Daughter of the Regiment.* Fate's most recent beneficence came last year when director Harold Prince's son Charles asked Blackwell to be the soloist for his wedding at the Rainbow Room. The director was smitten "the moment I heard her glorious voice," he says, and cast her in the lead of *Candide.* Like Voltaire's novel, Bernstein's blackly comedic musical follows Cunegonde and her titular boyfriend around the world as they brave the Spanish Inquisition, piracy, and the unwanted attentions of a Bulgarian regiment—slings and arrows that seem rather foreign to Blackwell's own charmed existence. Still, the star assures us she's up to the challenge. Going from the opera house to Broadway is, says Blackwell, with a nod to Voltaire, "the best of all possible worlds." REBECCA PALLER

From left: Jason Danieley, Jim Dale, and Harolyn Blackwell.

Now Playing

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

Bunny Bunny—Alan Zweibel's three-character play about his fourteen-year relationship with Gilda Radner. $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 3/23/97. *Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

Dealer's Choice—Patrick Marber's suspense comedy, set in a small London restaurant and based around a poker game. $32. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/8/97. *Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Doctor Doctor—An original musical revue by Peter Ekstrom featuring medically minded arias like "Eighty Thousand Orgasms," "I Hope I Never Get," and "It's My Fat." But do they make house calls? $15–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 3/26/97. *Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (239-6200).*

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Some titles say it all, and Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, let's be kind and say propitious time. $35–$40. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 7:30, Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3; food and drink available/optional. *Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Full Gallop—This is the monodrama—I mean monofarce—about Diana Vreeland, the fearsome fashion arbiter, who for decades wielded style-making power from behind her desks at *Harper's Bazaar* and then *Vogue*. A whirlwind bearing aloft talented models, designers, and photographers, she was a scintillating wit and fabulous character in her own right and wrong. We are granted an hour and three quarters with a fabled *monstre sacré* in her demonic digs as we listen to her recollect a chicly checkered past; pass canny judgment on people and fashions and life; conduct uproarious dialogues with her skeptical French maid, Yvonne, over the intercom; and hobnob telephonically with the luminaries of international society. As sublimely performed by Mary Louise Wilson—whose makeup, utterance, and demeanor fit Vreeland to a tee—this is the highest hilarity, the Everest of camp. Hear Miss Wilson say, "You can't destroy Europe; you can't even nick it," or "We are all allowed a splash of bad taste—no taste is what I am against," and you will feel transported into Thalia's lap. (Simon: 10/14/96.) $37.50–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

God's Heart—Craig Lucas's latest, starring Amy Brenneman and Julie Kavner, among others, as eight urbanites who form an unlikely connection; directed by Joe Mantello. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 4/6/97. *Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, Lincoln Center (239-6200).*

Godspell—The first all-black production of Stephen Schwartz's 1971 rock opera. $25. Thurs. and Fri. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 2/6. *Victoria Theatre, 235 W. 125th St. (769-8183).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding,* written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $37.50–$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. and Thurs. at 2, Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

The Hairy Ape—The Wooster Group presents Eugene O'Neill's expressionist drama. Directed by Elizabeth LeCompte; starring Willem Dafoe. $45–$55. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7. Opened: 4/3/97. *Selwyn Theater, 229 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's play benefits from an original slant: child molestation as an act of consenting partners, with the child as a willing participant. Miss Vogel acknowledges her debt to Nabokov's *Lolita*. She has written a memory play about a pedophile and his big-breasted niece by marriage, Uncle Peck and Li'l Bit, names a trifle too apt to ring true. The driving lessons Uncle

Photograph by Michael Cooper.

Previews

Strike Zone

Spurred by the success of last year's 'Golden Boy,' Joanne Woodward brings another Odets classic to the Blue Light Theater Company, this time 'Waiting for Lefty.' Marisa Tomei stars as a Depression-era union worker trying to decide whether to strike or labor.

Peck gives Li'l Bit over the years are a slow, careful—even caring—seduction. Miss Vogel uses the topography and chronology of her own life for L.B.'s story; is this done merely to anchor fiction more firmly in reality, or are we nudged into speculating about her self-proclaimed lesbianism, even if we accept her asseveration that this is not autobiography? Mark Brokaw has directed inventively in Narelle Sissons's rather too schematic set. David Morse is an utterly disarming U.P.: cunning pedophile and self-deluded good ol' boy in warm-hearted blend; Mary-Louise Parker dons several ages from 11 to 35 with the skill of a quick-change artist (Simon: 3/31/97). $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 3/16/97. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly—One of 1996's more melancholy theater trends was the posthumous musical. Like *Rent* composer Jonathan Larsen, costumer and musical "conceiver" Howard Crabtree passed away in June, days after completing work on his latest backstage-comedy revue. But the show, as developed by Mr. Crabtree with Dick Gallagher and Mark Waldrop, goes on. $40. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

A Huey P. Newton Story—Roger Guenveur Smith's take on the life of the founder of the Black Panther Party, with sound design by Marc Anthony Thompson. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 4/27. *LuEsther Hall, Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

The Joy of Going Somewhere Definite—The world premiere of Quincy Long's meditation on marriage, courtesy three unemployed (but philosophical) loggers. Directed by Atlantic Theater Company co-founder, and Academy Award nominee, William H. Macy. $32. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7. Opened: 4/7/97. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (239-6200).*

Men on the Verge of a His-Panic Breakdown—Multiple monologues about the gay Hispanic experience written by and starring Felix A. Pire. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 9, Sun. at 5. *47th St. Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (265-1086).*

My Italy Story—One man's journey from Hoboken to Italy, searching for his roots. Written by Joseph Gallo; starring Daniel Mastrogiorgio. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/31/97. *47th St. Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (265-1086).*

On House—A comic expose of what goes on behind the scrubs in a suburban Catholic hospital. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 4/2/97. *WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. (206-0523).*

The Plough and the Stars—Sean O'Casey's classic, directed by Charlotte Moore. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/3/97. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Psychopathia Sexualis—John Patrick Shanley's fetish comedy, starring Daniel Gerroll, Andrew McCarthy, and Park Overall. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. Opened: 2/25/97. *Manhattan Theatre Club's Stage I, City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. More engaging than you might expect. $29.50–$42.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

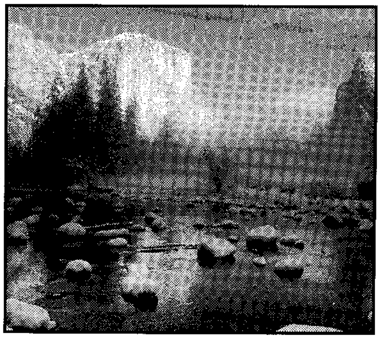
Stonewall Jackson's House—A new comedy about a young woman who violates racial taboos—political correctness, take that! $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 4/27. *American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Tap Dogs—An Australian import, a rollicking tap show with a gritty edge. $20–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 3/16/97. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (307-4100).*

Tokyo Shock Boys—Japan's answer to the Blue Man Group: less inventive and more vulgar, but intermittently funny in a fairly foul sort of way. Enjoyment depends on how you respond to milk ingested through the nose coming out through the eye, tunes drummed out on bald sconces, firecrackers launched from the anus, and someone in a chair on coasters being pulled by a rope attached to someone else's scrotum. There is talent here, albeit of a rather unclassifiable nature (Simon: 3/3/97). $25–$35. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. Opened: 2/19/97. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, bet. 6th Ave. and MacDougal St. (307-4100).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $60–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(279-4200).*

Photograph by Barnaby Draper.



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Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

John James Audubon—Sixty hand-colored engravings from the first edition of the artist's *The Birds of America*, completed in June 1838; through 4/26. Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

Robert Courtwright—A series of collage constructions inspired by the works of James Joyce; through 5/3. Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St. (288-5888).

Bunny Harvey—Large-scale landscape paintings and works on paper; through 5/3. Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. (744-2300).

James Havard—New paintings whose imagery draws on the artist's Native American ancestry; through 4/26. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (988-6870).

Aristide Maillol—A selection of bronze sculptures, paintings, and drawings by the French artist (1861–1944); through 6/7. C & M, 45 E. 78th St. (861-0020).

Knox Martin—A survey of the artist's early paintings, ranging from the early fifties to the early seventies, that were originally exhibited at the Charles Egan Gallery, the Rose Fried Gallery, and the Fischbach *Gallery; through 9/30. Gat, 1100 Madison Ave.* (327-0441).

Katherine Porter—Recent abstract paintings, some of them multi-paneled and more than ten feet long; through 4/26. Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (879-6606).

Reeve Schley/Angela Verdon—New oil paintings that depict landscapes, views from the artist's studio windows, still lifes, and figures; 4/15–5/10/New ceramics; 4/19–5/17. Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767).

Donald Sultan—New paintings of still life and urban landscapes; through 5/3. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (794-0550).

Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat—Large collaborative paintings dating from 1984–85; through 4/26. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (744-2313).

57th Street Area

Oscar Bluemner—Modernist landscape paintings by the Prussian-born artist (1917–1930) who was influenced by the European traditions of Cézanne, Van Gogh, Matisse, German Expressionism, and Symbolism as well as Oriental art; through 6/6. Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. (752-5135).

Jennifer Bolande—A series of sixteen sepia-toned iris prints titled "Forest Spirits," the imagery in each print taken from the same found postcard of a path in the woods; through 5/24. Baron/Boisanté, 50 W. 57th St. (581-9191).

Lesley Dill—Large-format silver-gelatin prints from which most of the emulsion has been removed and the exposed paper covered in a variety of media; through 5/3. Adams, 41 W. 57th St. (644-5665).

Rackstraw Downes—Recent paintings of urban landscapes in Texas and New Jersey; through 5/3. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (541-4900).

Grace Hartigan—Recent large-scale paintings of heroic figures, among them Napoleon and Joan of Arc; through 5/3. ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (644-8300).

Michael Kessler/Jacquelyn McBain—Recent paintings/Small-scale still-life paintings that are metaphoric representations of such stories as "Saint Agatha's Breasts", "Saint Joan of Arc Burned as a Witch & Herbalist", and "Saint Roch & the Plague of Frogs." Through 5/3. Littlejohn Con*temporary*, 41 E. 57th St. (980-2323).

Käthe Kollwitz and Lea Grundig—Drawings and prints by two of Germany's foremost political artists; through 5/31. St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (245-6734).

Robert Kushner—New paintings on the theme of flowers and the harvest; through 5/3. DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111).

Michael Mazur—Recent abstract paintings that evoke landscapes and Chinese painting; through 5/3. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

Louise Nevelson—Sculpture from the artist's estate executed between 1957 and 1987, including wall reliefs, free-standing sculptures, steel maquettes, and several assemblage works that have not been previously exhibited, through 4/26 at PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292); and sculpture and drawings from the thirties, from the artist's estate, through 4/19 at Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (397-6780).

Dennis Oppenheim—Six new installations that employ *a variety of objects and materials; through 5/3.* Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Ken Price—New ceramic sculptures; through 5/10. Parrasch, 20 W. 57th St. (246-5360).

Sophie Ryder—Sculptures in manipulated wire and cast bronze by an English artist; through 5/3. O'Hara, 41 E. 57th St. (355-3330).

Thomas Schütte—A work titled *Die Fremden* (The Strangers) that comprises sculptures of glazed clay figures who appear to be mourning; through 5/10. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (977-7160).

Richard Stankiewicz—Figurative and abstract sculptures from the fifties; through 5/3. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Lenore Tawney/Martha Madigan—A survey of the artist's weavings, collages, and assemblages/Photograms that juxtapose images of leaves, stones, pine cones, and other objects from nature with bodies of young children; through 5/31. Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (247-0082).

***Alessandro Twombly**—New paintings; through 5/7.* McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. (956-3366).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Skip Arnold—Photographs, videos, memoirs, blueprints, maps, letters, and other material documenting the artist's performances from 1982 to the present; through 4/30. Brownstone, 39 Wooster St. (334-3455).

Michel Auder—A five-monitor video installation titled *Five Ring Circus*; through 5/17. AC Project Room, 15 Renwick St. (219-8275).

Louise Belcourt—Recent abstract paintings; through 5/3. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (343-0441).

Carolyn Brady—Monumentally scaled watercolors of well-known English gardens; through 5/24. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (966-6676).

Peter Brown—Painted sculptural reliefs; through 4/26. M-13, 72 Greene St. (925-3007).

Ernst Caramelle—Recent drawings, "gessopieces," "*sunpieces*," *and a new print; through 5/17.* Markey, 55 Vandam St. (627-4446).

Jesper Christiansen—Paintings that use the potted plant as a still-life object and a crossing between the indoor and outdoor world; through 5/17. DCA, 420 W. Broadway (334-3331).

Ron English—Recent paintings; through 4/30. Stendhal, 386 W. Broadway (334-4649).

Suzanne Etkin—New kinetic sculptures that allude to everyday signage; through 5/31. Solomon, 172 Mercer St. (941-5777).

Walton Ford—New paintings and watercolors that create allegories of cultural misunderstandings between East and West through the depiction of native Indian birds joined by groups of non-native birds such as European starlings or woodpeckers; through 5/10. Kasmin, 74 Grand St. (219-3219).

Frank Gerritz—Graphite drawings from the series "Seraphic Light"; through 5/3. Stark, 113 Crosby St. (925-4484).

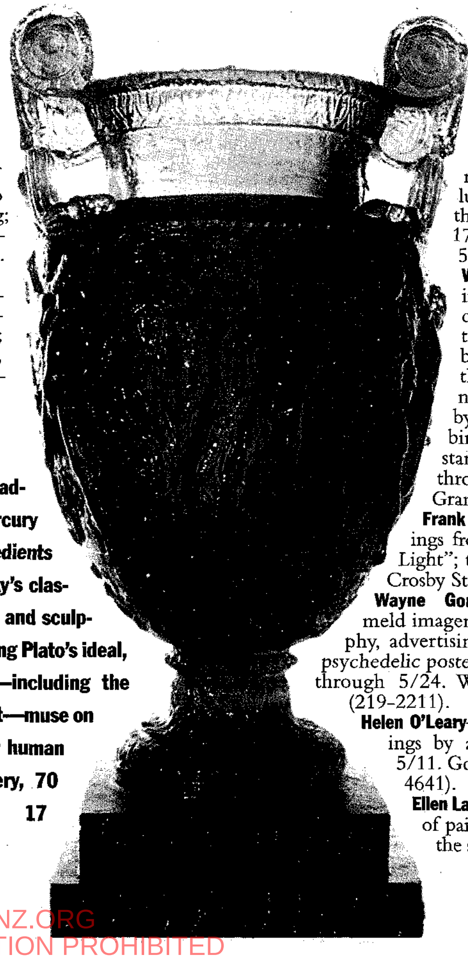
Wayne Gonzalez—Paintings that meld imagery from stock photography, advertising, corporate graphics, psychedelic poster art, and other sources; through 5/24. Wittels, 48 Greene St. (219-2211).

Helen O'Leary—Lyrical abstract paintings by an Irish artist; through 5/11. Gold, 474 Broadway (941-4641).

Ellen Lanyon—Two related series of paintings on the themes of the seasons, the elements, the

Talent

Powdered flowers, eye shadow, nail polish, and mercury *are just a few of the ingredients* that go into Stuart Netsky's classically inspired paintings and sculptures. Rather than invoking Plato's ideal, these luminous works—including the cast-resin urn at the right—muse on vanity, deceit, and other human weaknesses. At Z Gallery, 70 Greene Street; April 17 through May 18.



Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

passage of stars, and gardens; through 5/10. Zarre, 48 Greene St. (966-2222).

June Leaf—New paintings that continue the artist's exploration of the figure in a landscape and small metal sculptures that depict figures in gestures of turning and closing; through 5/17. Thorp, 103 Prince St. (431-6830).

Tony Matelli—Two new sculptures and a poster; through 5/17. Basilico, 26 Wooster St. (966-1831).

Catherine McCarthy/Enrique Chagoya—Dreamlike paintings that borrow from such diverse sources as art history and the artist's own family scrapbook/Works that draw on the artist's Mexican heritage, including a fold-out, Mayan-inspired book that addresses political issues through cartoonlike images. Through 4/26. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (219-2863).

Melissa McGill—An installation titled *Myths, Inflections, and Innuendoes* that explores the possibilities of shadows cast by the fourth dimension; through 4/26. CRG, 93 Grand St. (966-4360).

Stuart Netsky—Sculptures cast from plaster-cast reproductions of classical figures that use a variety of "alchemical" recipes, and paintings that resemble classical paintings; 4/17–5/18. Z, 70 Greene St. (966-8836).

Luigi Ontani—Ceramic self-portraits of the artist as Jackson Pollock, Dante, and other historic figures, and painted photographs; through 4/26. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

Jaime Palacios—Paintings on found photographs; through 5/3. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Madhvi Parekh—Paintings whose narratives draw on the artist's rural upbringing and her everyday experiences of city life in New Delhi; through 5/10. Bose Pacia Modern, 580 Broadway (966-3224).

Sarah Plimpton—Lyrical abstract paintings that suggest landscape; through 4/30. Kelly, 591 Broadway (226-1660).

Jason Rhoades—A new installation titled *Deviations in Space, Various Virgins* that utilizes the gallery's entire space and whose central element is a Spaceball TM, a simple mechanical structure originally designed to create a sensation of suspended gravity through multidirectional rotation within a sphere; through 4/26. Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (966-9074).

Bill Scanga—Miniature models of the nineteenth-century American landscape painting rooms at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a traditional zoo, and a contemporary living room inhabited by live and taxidermied mice; through 5/10. TZ'Art, 28 Wooster St. (966-9059).

Jessica Stockholder—Recent sculpture; through 5/10. Gorney, 100 Greene St. (966-4480).

Andy Warhol—Small-scale paintings executed in 1983 that depict packages for toys; 4/16–5/30. Danziger, 130 Prince St. (226-0056).

Terri Zupac—Oil-on-panel landscapes that evoke both abstract painting and seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting; through 5/3. Golden, 16 Mercer St. (334-3124).

Chelsea

Doug Aitken—Two new installation works, one of which, *Diamond Sea*, is being shown in its linear version in the film and video program of the 1997 Whitney Biennial; through 4/26. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (255-1121).

Tadao Ando/Richard Pare—Twelve-foot-long scroll drawings and highly finished renderings of buildings by the Japanese architect/Photographs of architecture. Through 5/3. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (633-6999).

Stephen Antonakos/Joel Fisher—A new neon sculpture, drawings, and a model for a chapel/New bronze and plaster sculpture and drawings. Through 4/27. Stux, 535 W. 20th St. (352-1600).

Nayland Blake/Inez van Lamsweerde—New sculptures and drawings that explore themes of racial and sexual identity; through 4/26/Large-scale photographs whose central figure is an eight-year-old girl; through 5/17. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (243-0200).

Lewis deSoto—Sculptural works that draw on creation myths and stories of origination; through 5/11. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

Katherine Dimmia/Allison Smith—Photographs of nudes painted with clothing appropriated from Hieronymous Bosch paintings/Works from the artist's "Bloomer Kite" project, for which she constructed several aerodynamic kites derived from a pattern for nineteenth-century bloomers and took them for their maiden voyage in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Through 5/11. Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (243-5937).

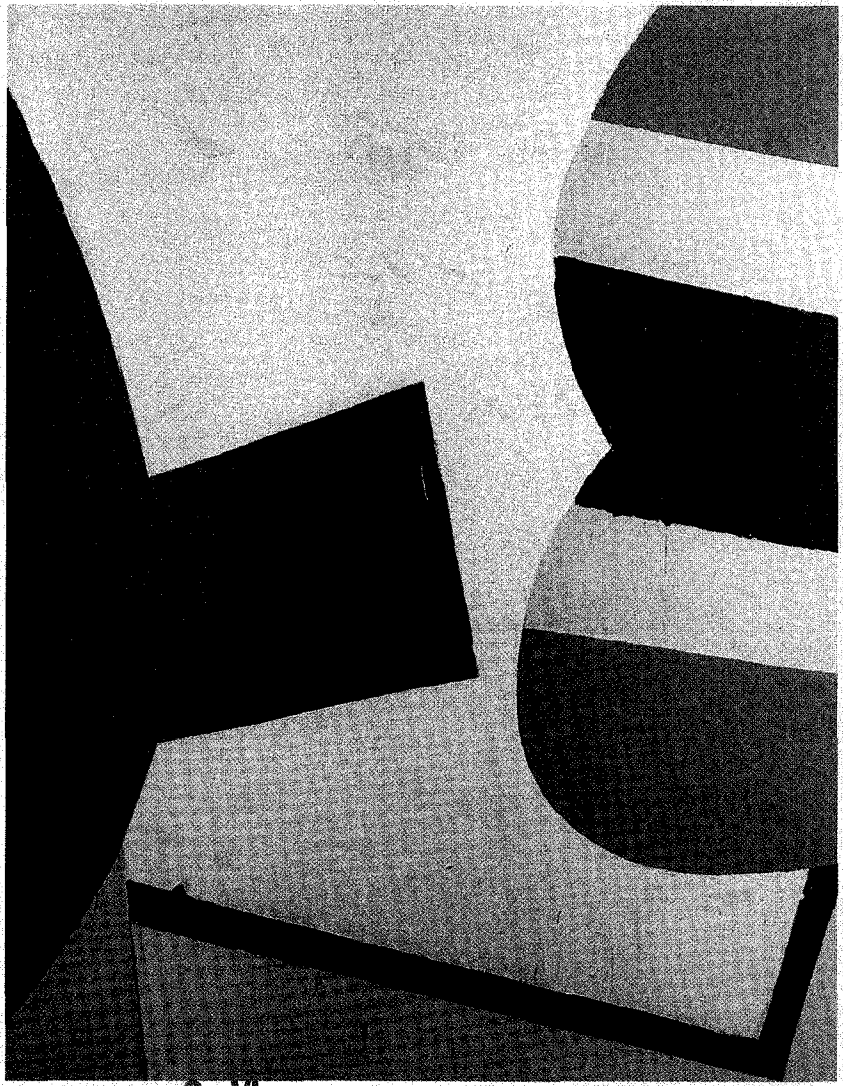
Arturo Duclos—Paintings on canvas and tablecloths that combine laser-transfer techniques, appliqué, acrylic, food, and wine; through 4/30. Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (741-8695).

George Stoll—Sculptures of toilet paper made from wood, silk, aluminum foil, paint, and other materials, and paintings and drawings of toilet paper; through 5/11. Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. (243-3753).

Juan Uslé—An overview of the Spanish artist's photographs, shown with a selection of his paintings; through 5/31. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (242-7727).

Other

Fabio Herrera—Abstract paintings by a Costa Rican–born artist that incorporate sand, marble dust,



On View

Silent Partner

Friend of de Kooning, confidante to Kline, and mentor to Rauschenberg, Knox Martin has had a relatively quiet career himself, exhibiting his work only sporadically while teaching at Yale Graduate School of the Arts and the Art Students League. Even so, a small survey of his early paintings at the Janos Gat Gallery (1100 Madison Avenue; through September 30) shows a strikingly eclectic artist, one whose style shifted dramatically from subdued, gestural abstractions to bold, geometric schematics. From this latter period comes "Caraha!" (above, 1968), which, at the 1972 Whitney Annual, Elaine de Kooning singled out as the most sensuously erotic painting in a room full of figurative works.

Photograph courtesy of the Janos Gat Gallery.

dirt, and stone; through 5/31. Intar, 420 W. 42nd St. (695-6135).

Mary Ann Unger/Margery Mellman—New sculpture/ Drawings and watercolors. Through 5/10. Trans Hudson, 416 W. 13th St. (242-3232), Wed.–Sun. 12–6.

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Hunter College—68th St. and Lexington Ave. (772-4991). "Turning the Corner," abstract works by Korman, Prokop, Lasker, Ruda, Timperio, others; through 5/10.

Ubu—16 E. 78th St. (794-4444). Surreal, sexually explicit collages by the avant-garde Czech artist Jindrich Styrsky (1899-1942) from the book *Emile Comes to Me in a Dream;* erotic photographs and collages dating from 1929–1948 by Bellmer, Brzeski, Hugnet, and Racz; through 5/3.

57th Street Area

Associated American Artists—20 W. 57th St. (399-5510). Figurative works by Argue, Baechler, Spero, others; through 5/3.

PaineWebber—1285 Ave. of the Americas (593-6427). "Beaux Arts New York," with photographs, blueprints, posters, and decorative objects from the city's Gilded Age; 4/18-6/27.

Snyder—20 W. 57th St. (262-1160). Works by expatriates living in Paris in the twenties and thirties, including works by Alexander Calder, Man Ray, Frank Stella, others; through 5/17.

View—250 E. 51st St. (317-9757). Works by Borkowski, Noble and Zarebski; through 5/3.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Exit Art—548 Broadway (966-7745). Ten painters will use the gallery as their studio, including Avsar, Coffey, Gordon, Mellyn, Pensato, others; through 4/26.

Nolan/Eckman—560 Broadway (925-6190). Self-portraits by Baselitz, Smith, Westerman, others; through 4/26.

Sundvik—26 Grand St. (226-6361). "The Leisure Sector," with works by Daniel, Lavelle, Noble, others; through 5/11.

Chelsea

Metro Pictures—519 W. 24th St. (206-7100). Paintings by Dunham and Miller, sculpture by Kelley, and early photographs by Simmons; through 4/26.

Other

Equitable—787 Seventh Ave. (554-4818). Art from Africa, Oceania, and the Americas from the Wielgus collection; through 5/31.

Snug Harbor Cultural Center—1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island (718-448-2500). "After the Fall: Aspects of Abstract Painting Since 1970," with works by Benglis, Kim, and Stella; through 6/29.

White Columns—154 Christopher St. (924-4212), "Ceramics," with works by Dickey, Heilmann, Kustera, Scher, Semmes, others; through 5/4.

Photography

Manuel Alvarez Bravo/Colette Alvarez Urbajtel—An exhibition marking the artist's ninety-fifth birthday/ Color photographs taken in Mexico, New Guinea, China, France, and elsewhere. Through 5/3. Witkin, 415 West Broadway (925-5510).

David Armstrong—Black-and-white photographs of landscapes and portraits; through 5/23. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (243-0200).

Tina Barney—New photographs of nudes; through 5/10. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Benrubi—52 E. 76th St. (517-3766). Photographs of Brooklyn from the late nineteenth-century to the present; through 5/3.

Nancy Burson—A group of photographs that haven't been shown before in the US; 4/19-5/17. Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St. (780-0071).

Van Deren Coke—Photography since the forties; through 5/17. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Christopher Giglio—New cathode rayograms; 4/16–5/30. Danziger, 130 Prince St. (226-0056).

Nicholas Kahn and Richard Selesnick—Photographic collages; through 5/3. Knowlton, 568 Broadway (966-2625).

Steven Klein—Fashion photography from the past five years; through 5/30. Staley-Wise, 47 Mercer St. (917-930-3435).

McKinney—526 E. 11th St. (677-7807). Photography by Berio, Foster, Gowin, others; through 5/3.

Nicholas Pearson—Black-and-white photographs of clouds of water vapor; through 5/3. Condeso/ Lawler, 524 Broadway (219-1283).

Richardson—560 Broadway (343-1255). "Sex and Eroticism in the 20th Century," with works by Bravo, Goldin, Seltzer, others; through 5/17.

Staley-Wise—560 Broadway (966-6223). Photographs of Ford models; through 5/17.

Arne Svenson—Black-and-white photographs of Las Vegas; through 5/10. Saul, 560 Broadway (431-0747).

John Szarkowski/William Christenberry—New black-and-white photographs of a nineteenth-century barn on the photographer's property in East Chatham, New York/Sculptures, drawings, and vintage brownie holiday photographs. Through 5/10. PaceWildensteinMacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (759-7999).

Guram Tsibakh—"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," with photography and text by the Moscow-based artist; through 5/17. Goldstein, 39 Wooster St. (431-0314).

Catherine Wagner—Photographs of the objects and subjects in contemporary science; through 6/15. ICP, 1130 Fifth Ave. (860-1777).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Beatrice Wood: A Centennial Tribute." A retrospective of the artist's drawings, paintings, and ceramic work; through 6/8. . . . "Messengers of Modernism: American Studio Jewelry 1940–1960"; through 6/8. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish till 8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk." An exhibition examining the causes and effects of species endangerment and extinction; through 9/1. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $7 suggested contribution, $5 students and seniors, $4 children.

Asia Society—"Along the Trade Routes: Buddhist Objects From the Asia Society Collection"; through 5/11. 725 Park Ave. (288-6400), Tues., Wed., Fri., and Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. to 8), Sun. 12–5; $3, $1 students and seniors, free Thurs. 6–8.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"Masterworks: Italian Design, 1960–1994." A selection of furniture, metalwork, glass, ceramics, and lighting by Italian designers, from the collection of the Denver Art Museum; through 6/29. 18 W. 86th St. (501-3000), Tues.–Sun. 11–5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 seniors and students.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"From Pockets to Pouches: Three Centuries of Handbags at the Brooklyn Museum of Art." A selection of historical and period handbags from the museum's own collection; through 6/22. . . . "American Paintings: Ashcan and Modernist, A Centennial Exhibition"; through 6/30. . . . "Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt." 250 objects and artworks from public and private collections, including works from the collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art;" through 5/18. . . . "A Different Reality: Symbolist Prints From the Collection." Prints by Symbolist artists from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; through 5/7. . . . "Rediscovering James Brooks: WPA Murals and Other Figural Works." A group of 20 works selected from a gift of 244 from the artist's widow, Charlotte Brooks, including preparatory drawings, gouaches, and tempera studies for Brooks's realist-style mural *Flight*, in the Marine Air Terminal at La Guardia Airport; through 5/4. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Sun. 10–5; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

China Institute—"Adornment for Eternity: Status and Rank in Chinese Ornament." Ancient belts, garment hooks, hair ornaments, and other treasures from the Mengdiexuan Collection; through 6/28. 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181), Mon.–Sat. 10–5, Tues. 10–8, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum—"Henry Dreyfuss Directing Design: The Industrial Designer and His Work, 1929–72." Works by the legendary industrial designer who pioneered the use of human factors in the design of consumer products; through 8/31. . . . "*Disegno*: Italian Renaissance Designs for Decorative Arts"; through 5/18. 2 E. 91st St. (860-6909), Tues. 10–9, Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 seniors and students.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Juan Muñoz: *A Place Called Abroad*." An installation of a streetlike environment occupied by groups of figures; through 6/29. . . . "Hanne Darboven: Kulturgeschichte 1880–1983"; through 6/1. . . . "Fred Sandback: Sculpture"; through 6/29. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912), Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $4 , $2 students and seniors.

Frick Collection—1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery & Study Center—"Art of the Everyday: France in the 90s." Works by eight young French artists whose art draws on everyday experiences; through 5/3. 100 Washington Square East (998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8:30, Sat. 11–5; free.

Guggenheim Museum—"A Century of Sculpture: The Nasher Collection." The New York premiere of the collection formed by Patsy R. and Raymond D. Nasher, with sculptures by Matisse, Picasso, Brancusi, Giacometti, and others; through 6/1. . . . "Rrose is a Rrose is a Rrose: Gender Performance in Photography." An exhibition that explores the various ways in which identity has been theatrically constructed in photography, from Man Ray's 1921 portrait of Marcel Duchamp as his feminine alter-ego Rrose Sélavy to the self-portraiture and computer-generated images of contemporary artists; through 5/7. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $8, $5 students and seniors.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Rooms With a View: Environments for Video." Video viewing environments by contemporary artists Vito Acconci, Angela Bulloch, Dan Graham, Jorge Pardo, and Tobias Rehberger; 4/16–6/15. . . . "Art/Fashion." An exhibition illustrating the ways in which art and fashion have converged over the years; through 6/8. 575 Broadway (423-3500); Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8, Sun. 11–6; $6, $4 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum—"Bordering on Fiction: Chantal Akerman's 'D'Est.' " A film-and-video installation of the Belgian film-director's feature-film documenting her journey to eastern Germany, Poland, and Russia in the early nineties; through 5/27. . . . "Holidays! Jewish Seasons and Celebrations"; through 4/19. 1109 Fifth Ave. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5; free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Cartier: 1900–1939." A survey of the greatest achievements of the House of Cartier, including jewelry, clocks, watches, vanity cases, cigarette boxes, and other accessories, and design drawings and recently discovered original plaster casts of the finished jewels that were used as a three-dimensional record by the firm; through 8/3. . . . "The Four Seasons." Costume's variations throughout the year, including the traditional wardrobe rotations for social, seasonal, and climatic purposes; through 8/17. . . . "The Glory of Byzantium"; through 7/6. . . . "Giambattista Tiepolo." America's first major retrospective of the eighteenth-century Italian master's paintings and etchings;

through 4/27. . . . "Venetian Prints and Books in the Age of Tiepolo"; through 4/27. . . . "Domenico Tiepolo: Drawings, Prints, and Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Works by the son and collaborator of Giambattista Tiepolo; through 4/27. . . . "The Florene M. Schoenborn Bequest: Artists of the School of Paris"; through 5/4. . . . "The Human Figure in Transition, 1900–1945: American Sculpture From the Museum's Collection"; through 9/28. . . . "American Tonalism: Paintings, Drawings, Prints, and Photographs." Works by James Abbott McNeill Whistler, George Inness, Arthur Davies, Edward Steichen, and others that illuminate a phase of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American art that emphasized subdued poetic mood and muted coloration; through 6/1. . . . "Indian Court Painting: 16th–19th Century"; through 7/6. . . . "Following the Stars: Images of the Zodiac in Islamic Art"; through 8/31. . . . "The Art of the Renaissance Woodworker: The Gubbio Studiolo Restored." An exhibition that complements the museum's recent installation of a room of inlaid trompe-l'oeil panels that was once the *studiolo* of Duke Federico da Montefeltro; through 4/30. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $7 contribution, $3.50 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum for African Art—"Art That Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia"; through 8/31. . . . "To Cure and Protect: Sickness and Health in African Art"; through 8/31. 593 Broadway (966-1313); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 children, seniors, and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"The Alternative World of Henry Darger." A retrospective of paintings by the self-taught Chicago artist (1892–1973); through 4/27. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of the City of New York—"A Dream Well Planned: The Empire State Building." Photographs, drawings, models, and memorabilia associated with New York's most famous icon; through 1/11. . . . "We Dig New York: The Professional Archeologists of New York"; through 9/14. . . . "The Streets and Beyond: New York Photographs." Photographs of New York street life by well-known New York photographers; through 6/8. . . . "New York Toy Stories." A selection of toys from the museum's collection, ranging in date from the eighteenth century to the present; through 4/27. . . . "A Museum for a New Century: The Museum of the City of New York in the 21st Century"; through 6/29. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Projects: Architecture as Metaphor." Painting, sculpture, and photography by seven artists who use architectural motifs and imagery as a basis for their work; through 6/3. . . . "Projects: Rirkrit Tiravanija." A child-size model of an International Style glass pavilion erected in the museum's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden; through 6/3. . . . "The Photomontages of Hannah Höch." The first U.S. retrospective of the German artist's photomontages; through 5/20. . . . "Manuel Alvarez Bravo." A retrospective of photographs by the twentieth-century Mexican master; through 5/18. . . . "Willem de Kooning: The Late Paintings, the 1980s"; through 4/29. . . . "American Photography 1890–1965 From the Collection"; through 7/8. . . . "The Maximal Sixties: Pop, Op, Figuration." Pop, Op, and Kinetic artworks from the museum's collection; through 4/29. . . . "A Singular Vision:" Prints From Landfall Press"; through 5/6. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 11–6, Thurs. and Fri. noon–8:30, closed Wed.; $8.50, $5.50 students and seniors (Thurs. and Fri. 5:30–8:30, pay what you wish).

National Academy of Design—"Landscapes of Louis Rémy Mignot: A Southern Painter Abroad"; through 5/11. 1083 Fifth Ave. (369-4880); Wed.–Sun. 12–5 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

New-York Historical Society—"An Unquenchable Thirst: Springs and Wells of New York City"; through 6/1. . . . "Taking Flight: John James Audubon and the Watercolors for *Birds of America*"; through 9/7. . . . "Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village." An exhibition of documents relating to the African-American community called Seneca Village that existed from the 1820s through the 1850s on what is now the west side of Central Park; through 8/10. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

New York Public Library—"Wild New York: The Printmaker and the Natural Landscape From the Age of Exploration Through the Twentieth Century"; through 6/28. . . . "Let There Be Light: William Tyndale and the Making of the English Bible"; through 5/17. . . . "Richard Tuttle: Books and Prints at the New York Public Library." A survey of the artist's books and prints from 1965 to the present; through 5/31. . . . "First Fruits." An exhibition of writers' first books; through 9/20. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

P.S. 1 Clocktower—46-01 21st St., Long Island City (718 784-2084). Works by artists selected for the 1997 Studio Program; through 5/14.

Queens Museum—"Queens Artists: Highlights of the 20th Century." Works by Benny Andrews, Joseph Cornell, James Brooks, Alex Katz, Melissa Meyer, Isamu Noguchi, Ad Reinhardt, Art Speigelman, and other artists who have lived or worked in Queens; through 7/6. . . . "The Lamps of Tiffany: Highlights of the Egon and Hildegard Neustadt Collection." Tiffany lamps, globes, and windows ranging over the entire lifetime of production at the Tiffany Studios, from 1893 to 1938; through 11/2. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3 suggested donation, $1.50 seniors and children.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Growing Forward: Prints, Drawings, Sculpture, and Public Art by Richard Hunt, 1986–1996." An exhibition that interprets the influences of African-American history and culture, biology, and the urban industrial environment on the artist's work; through 6/29. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 seniors and students.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"1997 Biennial Exhibition." The sixty-ninth Biennial exhibition, featuring 200 works by approximately 70 artists; through 6/1. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). 4/17 at 10: "Photographs." On view from 4/12. 4/21 at 10: "Books." On view from 4/17.

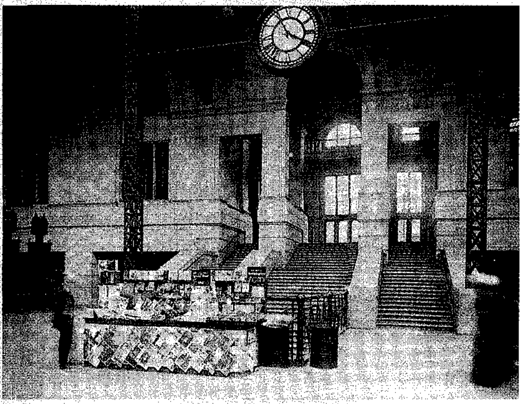
Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). 4/17 at 10: "Silver." On view from 4/12.

Sotheby's—York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 4/16 at 10:15 and 2: "Silver." On view from 4/12. 4/18 at 10:15 and 2: "Photographs." On view from 4/13.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (254-4710). 4/17 at 10:30: "Rare Books." On view from 4/12. 4/19 at 10:30 and 2:30: "19th- and 20th-Century Photographs." On view from 4/14.

Retrospective

Glory Days



Has any group of architects ever got so many of its works so right? A century after its reign, Paris's École des Beaux-Arts still colors our idea of what makes a major landmark: hefty massing, symmetrical façades, classical but restrained ornamentation. Even next to structures 50 stories taller, Beaux-Arts masterpieces like the New York Public Library and Grand Central Terminal still convey unmistakable stature. With benefactors like Astor, Vanderbilt, and Carnegie flexing their capitalist muscle—and funding luxury materials like bronze, stone, and stained glass—these structures were built for all time. But in the modernist mainstreaming of the fifties and sixties, Beaux-Arts style suddenly looked worn and overstuffed. So the 1908 Singer Tower on lower Broadway, once the tallest building in the world, became in 1970 the tallest building ever demolished. The Metropolitan Opera, when it moved to Lincoln Center in 1966, made sure its splendid 39th Street home was destroyed, lest it become home to a competitor. And in an act of sanctioned vandalism that gets aesthetes seething to this day, bland corporate kitsch replaced the glorious Roman vaults of Penn Station (above). These former giants join their surviving kin at "Beaux Arts New York," opening this week at the PaineWebber Art Gallery *(1285 Sixth Avenue, at 51st Street; 713-2885)*. Photographs, furniture, and posters will be on display, along with the inhumanly precise architectural drawings that are testament to the École's punishing lessons in pen-and-ink drafting. Only one detail seems out of place: the PaineWebber building itself, a 1961 steel-and-glass 42-story monolith of just the kind that replaced the Singer Tower. It is also exactly the sort of building that, out of style and short on respect, is today being skinned, reglazed, and even demolished all over town. Apparently today's post-postmodernist, chaos-rules eclecticism does not extend to something just a decade or so out of style. *Caveat renovator.*

CHRISTOPHER BONANOS

Photograph by Brown Brothers.

Stevens *continued from page 59*

tray landscape implies what we can finally know. Here, too, Downes is a modern artist, a manipulator of fragments.

Yet Downes also brings many traditional ambitions to his painting, which then provide a startling lens for the depiction of today's reality. (The past is often a brilliant critic of the present.) In contrast to many other painters today, Downes expends enormous effort on his compositions. Even as he lets space slide, he aspires to clarity. There is consideration in the placing of each form, concern with how the pieces fit. Much of his art consists in a delicate adjudication of the competing claims of fragment and whole, release and restraint—with the result that we gain a coherent, but also convincing, view of flux.

Downes also retains a painterly hand, choosing not to use the hard, shiny look of photography or advertising to convey contemporary spaces: There is nothing of Pop in his work. Instead, he slows art down, letting the eye catch on the paint. In other words, he treats the in-between spaces exactly as we do not treat them as we rush from here to there. This unexpected contrast awakens them. However ugly or lost or overlooked the area around a concrete overpass may be, Downes addresses it with unflinching attention and respect. He paints from life, not photographs, one of those toes-in-the-dirt painters who must be on the site and have the thing itself right there.

ART

A painting called *Rainwater Ditch With Six Culvert Bridge, Texas City,* which shows a godforsaken piece of Texas flatland, is one of the strongest works in the exhibition. Downes is a master of the clotted, branchy scrub that survives in such places; anyone who loves painting will marvel at how he portrays the vegetation in the lower left, near the culverts. Where the brown runoff is still and pooling, we can see a glassy sheen, perhaps some oil residue. A rippling current picks up farther down the ditch. You can almost taste dust on your tongue while studying the play of sandy browns in the thick Texas air.

No doubt there is a measure of redemption in the way Downes presents humble facts to the eye. There can also be something revelatory in his disinterested manner. In *At the Confluence of Two Ditches Bordering a Field With Four Radio Towers, Texas City,* a painting that's not as elongated as many others, Downes presents a weedy Texas field, a mucky ditch, and a highway. Overhead, a black cable whips through space—a stunning abstract line that's also perfectly realistic. In an art in which one is consistently aware of another vanishing point, another road leading somewhere else, another space beyond, there is always the possibility of a miracle.

But it would be a mistake to press the point. Downes is a reticent artist, loath to make any comment or to confine his details in a generalization. His refusal to provide a single visual focus mirrors his refusal to champion a point of view or shape a moral. The glassy reflection on the brown pool, for example, is not a reflection on pollution. Downes is neither an idealist nor one who pushes the dirty detail in your face. Instead, he represents a tradition that is largely lost today, exemplified by what T. S. Eliot said of Henry James—that he had a mind too fine for ideas.

Downes once wrote an essay called "What Realism Means to Me" in which he described how a Chekhov story "states the case" rather than makes a judgment: "The events one has just read about are horrible: but mainly one feels the acuteness of Chekhov's perceptions. His artistry says, to judge is presumptuous, to generalize is glib. What counts is to observe intensely, and when you do so you feel not so much inclined to advocate your opinion." In the end, "the real hero turns out to be the texture of life." Looking at his art demonstrates that, in fact, there *is* a there there.

ALTHOUGH HE WORKS IN A DIFFERENT TRADITION of painting, **Robert Mangold** shares certain important qualities with Rackstraw Downes. He is now in his late fifties, having come of age in the late-modernist era, and like Downes, he has helped refresh painting by becoming a master of what we cannot quite know or grasp. In Mangold's work, the mind is often inspired to play with thoughts and forms that his suggestive brush implies but does not state—certainty and completion representing a kind of death.

In his new "Zone Paintings" at PaceWildenstein in SoHo, Mangold has drawn ellipses in black pencil against brushy fields of color. Toward the center of the pictures are broad, coldly painted "zones" that interrupt the movement of these ellipses. These zones lack both the geometric clarity of the drawing (which is like the rational play of thought) and the warm moodiness of the fields of color behind the drawing. They resemble the dead spots in an old fresco that has been patched up with plaster. Just as we cannot grasp the full formal intent of a damaged Renaissance fresco—or repossess an earlier time's sense of order—so Mangold's thoughtful paintings evoke the fragmentary character of the contemporary mind. ■

Rubenstein *continued from page 66*

almost done in by some of the most inhospitable ice-cream flavors ever scooped (walnut with chocolate shavings thick as spackle, baffling orange-coconut sorbet, respectively). Chocolate hazelnut torte is as fun as a pinnoli-nut tuille is ridiculous. The blackberry soup needs about three more scoops of vanilla ice cream. Just ask. This staff will get almost anything for you. Not right away. But they'll get it. Just as TriBeCa is going to get 131 Duane—faster than it takes to catch a potato crust.

131 Duane (406-9030). Lunch, Monday through Friday noon–2:30. Dinner, Monday through Saturday 5:30–11:30. Appetizers, $6–$16; entrées, $17–$28. All major credit cards.

IF **Miracle Grill** TRULY DESERVED ITS NAME, IT would have turned up in the West Village two weeks after it opened in the East Village. Eight years later, it should be retitled the What the Hell Took You So Long to Get Here Café. This is the best fit since Penny Marshall and Rosie O'Donnell walked into Kmart. The appetizers are weaker than their East Side counterparts, and most side dishes are pallid afterthoughts. But what we have is a seemingly straightforward list of a dozen entrées, each with just the right amount of culinary sabotage to keep you keenly off kilter. Ancho-chili glaze gives an easy sweetness to barbecued salmon. Portobello fajitas are a super idea. Even better than the chicken, and they went faster than the margaritas. Grilled pork chops are tender and juicy. Saffron risotto is more delicate than you would think here, and richer thanks to smoked chilies. Blue-corn fried chicken with cayenne-buttermilk dressing wins applause, and chicken breast in a soy, ginger, and garlic marinade makes that protein diet not such a bad thing after all. Have the flan and the chocolate cake. Don't worry, the ice cream comes without chilies.

RESTAURANTS

But worry about this: At both 131 Duane and Miracle Grill, checks were incorrectly totaled. In fact, out of the last dozen checks I've been handed, five have had sizable mistakes—one for over $60. Night after night, I watch customers slide credit cards into check folders as fast as they are handed out. Since when do you trust a machine? Or the stranger feeding it information? Add your own checks, folks. Or you may be finding yourselves moving to less fancy neighborhoods real soon.

Miracle Bar & Grill, 415 Bleecker Street (924-1900). Dinner, daily 5:30–11:30. Brunch, Saturday and Sunday 11:30–3. Appetizers, $4.50–$10.95; entrées, $7.50–$18.50. All major credit cards. ■

restaurants

Matzoh Meals...Balthazar Bakery...The Park

Manhattan

Lower New York

Baluchi's—Indian fare served in a cozy, comfortable atmosphere in the center of SoHo. Have a seat on a patchwork chair amid fantastic imported treasures. *193 Spring St., bet. Thompson and Sullivan Sts. (226-2828). Also, 1565 Second Ave., nr. 81st St. (288-4810). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (677-4100). (M) AE only.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

F.illi Ponte Ristorante—A former longshoremen's hotel, newly renovated with a spectacular view of the Hudson River and New Jersey beyond. Join the throng—made men and gawking hangers-on—for fine Italian fare. *39 Desbrosses St. (226-4621). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. The emphasis is on Hudson River Valley cuisine, with specialties like venison prosciutto, squash soup, roast pheasant, and Catskill Mountains trout. *4 World Financial Ctr. (786-1500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

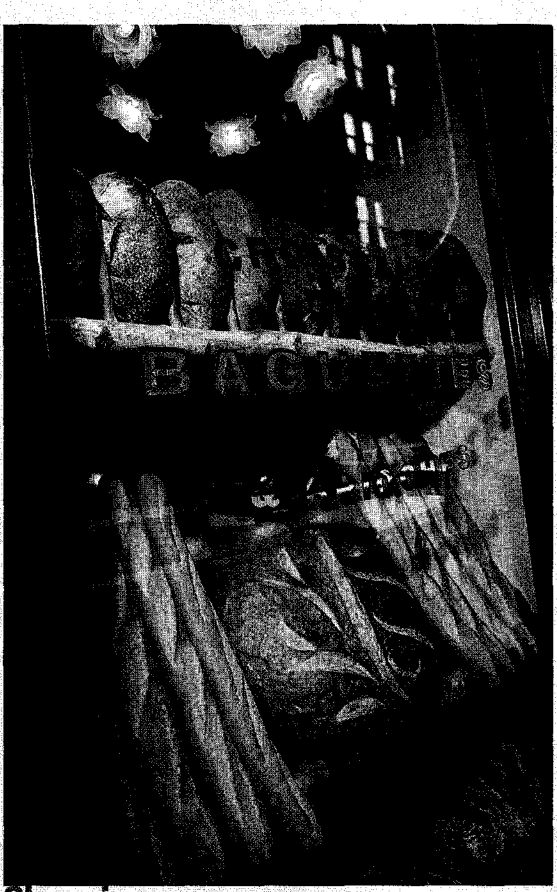
I Tre Merli—Bustling SoHo loft-like space, specializing in Northern Italian (specifically Genovese) cuisine. Try the homemade pastas and focaccia sandwiches. *463 W. Broadway (254-8699). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special three- and five-course menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. *462 Broadway, at Grand St. (219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted two Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*



Shopping

One Very Wise Man

Like all good restaurant moguls, Keith McNally has opened a bakery, both to furnish his empire and to sell retail. McNally's new Balthazar—which will share its name and location with a grand Parisian-style bistro (opening April 21)—is set to supply SoHo with baguettes, fougasse, Valrhona-chocolate bread, cherry focaccia, rye-and-orange brioche, plus French soups and sandwiches. (80 Spring Street.)

Photograph by Warren Salowe.

Salaam Bombay—Sophisticated Indian food has made it to the heart of TriBeCa. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners of the country include dahi batata poori from Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, and lamb pasanda from Kashmir. *317 Greenwich St. (226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Riodizio—This South American spot in NoHo specializes in *rodizio*, a dramatic processional of grilled meats and seafoods that stops only when you cry uncle. For lighter appetites, there's a good selection of salads and "little dishes" of spicy ribs, sweet-potato cakes, and Brazilian-style wrapped sandwiches. *417 Lafayette St. (529-1313). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Representative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; a fireplace increases the coziness quotient. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rincon de España—Spanish restaurant offering excellent paella and seafood; very small and intimate. *226 Thompson St. (260-4950). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tsunami—This contemporary Japanese restaurant frequented by neighboring NYU students and sushiphiles boasts the city's only revolving "water canal" sushi bar, with sushi boats that float by diners like a luggage carousel. The assortment of rolls includes spicy tuna, spider, and tropical, and the environment, thanks to the water theme, is soothing and serene. *70 W. 3rd St. (475-7770). (I) AE, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. *69 MacDougal St. (673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has *three* working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. *16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a new flavor on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like ackee-and-callaloo tart with scotch-bonnet-and-tomato salsa, and coconut-curry lobster with banana-lentil salad. The relaxing, tropical dining room and bar have already attracted such boldfaced names and beautiful faces as Harry Belafonte, Marisa Tomei, Iman, and Roshumba. *243 E. 14th St. (358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bobby O's Steakhouse—Celebrity owner Patrick Swayze and partner Bobby Ochs specialize in steaks—sirloin, filet mignon, and porterhouse—at a very affordable $18.50, plus lobster and prime rib. To make for a more peaceful dining experience, the boisterous bar area is partitioned off with cherrywood paneling. *560 Third Ave., at 37th St. (681-0400). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like baby clams in green onion broth as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. *23 E. 22nd St. (228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, old-world establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, TM, V.*

Granville—Besides adhering to the current vogue for clubby, cigar-friendly hangouts, this Gramercy restaurant and lounge offers modern takes on American cuisine—lobster medallions with oxtail risotto, for instance. And the D.J. booth upstairs provides an alternative to the old-English-gent vibe. *40 E. 20th St. (253-9088). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Stock & Tankard—Those looking to unwind after a hard day at the office can find comfort in this low-key bar, which serves over fifty microbrewed beers, twenty wines by the glass, diverse martinis, and frozen drinks. The steakhouse menu includes alligator and other offbeat options. *587 Third Ave., nr. 38th St. (661-3181). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately-priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. *120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

37th Street Hideaway—Restaurant and supper club in the former home of John Drew Barrymore. Dance to live music—this month, it's Nina Murani and her trio—between courses of Northern Italian fare, best sampled on the prix fixe lunch and dinner menus. Free parking available after five; closed Sunday. *32 W. 37th St. (947-8940). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., 45th St. at Vanderbilt Ave. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Coldwaters—Lots of fresh, simply prepared seafood: steamers, soft-shell crabs, lobsters, and grilled shrimp and scallops in a casual atmosphere. *988 Second Ave., at 52nd St. (888-2122). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can unwind. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck-breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (319-9463). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Domingo—Josefina Howard's foray into Spanish cooking is a homecoming of sorts. Downstairs there's a Castilian-style tapas bar; upstairs, a more traditional dining room with dramatic skylights. Drop in for churros y chocolate, or make a full meal of the regional Spanish specialties. *209 E. 49th St. (826-8154). (E) AE, MC, V.*

East Side Ale House—Beer drinkers—and people who love them—would be very happy in this unpretentious East Side pub. The extensive selection of all-American microbrews and single-malt Scotches is supplemented by the requisite bar food: wings, burgers, what-have-you. *961 Second Ave., at 51st St. (752-3615). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops, and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Elegant Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Il Postino—This elegant midtown Italian restaurant offers an interesting variety of daily specials, focusing on imported and domestic seafood. (Under the same ownership as the much-lauded Scalinatella.) *337 E. 49th St. (688-0033). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

La Mediterranée—A cozy midtown bistro famous for its simple, well-priced peasant food. Try house specials like cold poached salmon, chilled stuffed baby lobster, and baby lamb chops. *947 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (755-4155). (M) AE, DC.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. *405 E. 52nd St. (755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lutèce—The name is still synonymous with dishes like Dover sole, cassoulet, and rack of lamb. After three decades of defining traditional French cuisine, master chef André Soltner ceded the reins to relative innovator Eberhard Müller. The kitchen still astonishes. *249 E. 50th St. (752-2225). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Montebello—Shifting gears between neighborhood dinners and business lunches, the room transports patrons from their bustling surroundings to Northern Italy. *120 E. 56th St. (753-1447). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

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Happening **Scott Campbell (above, left), of Vince & Eddie's, and Henry Meer, of the Cub Room, are part of a squad of chefs appearing at the Union Square Greenmarket this Saturday. Their dual purposes: demonstrating spring recipes using Greenmarket staples like trout, wild ramps, and fiddlehead ferns, and stirring up interest in the impending 53-chef, $125-a-person Share Our Strength's Taste of the Nation benefit at the Marriott Marquis. Look also for Savoy's Peter Hoffman, Home's David Page, Verbena's Diane Forley, and the Water Club's Brad Steelman.**

Photograph by Robert Wright.

Preview

Lombardy Guys

John Scotto (right) was practicing law in Los Angeles while his family opened Fresco. Now he's caught the bug and returned home to launch The Park, a chandelier- and velvet-bedecked new restaurant opening April 21 in the Lombardy Hotel (109 East 56th Street). Chef Fabrizzio Salerni—formerly Gray Kunz's right-hand man at Lespinasse—orchestrates the refined American menu.

Naples Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—Authentic Japanese cuisine, including tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, served in elegant surroundings. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). Also, Shinbashi-an, 141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Shinbashi-an—Sophisticated midtown spot for Japanese food, with specialties including tempura, sukiyaki, shabu shabu, and sushi in a sleekly modern setting. Closed Saturday. *141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private men's club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, bubble-toting cherubs, jazz onstage, and American-influenced French cuisine. Executive chef Michel Bourdeaux has gussied up the menu with dishes like Caribbean-style grilled swordfish on spinach, and cabbage stuffed with mushroom and roasted squab. During the more sedate lunch hour, dine to the background music of harp or a classical trio. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Torremolinos—This casual midtown restaurant serves a variety of Spanish regional dishes, like paella Valenciana and Castilian-style rack of baby lamb. *230 E. 51st St. (755-1862). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Yan Van Van—This convenient pit stop for commuters and midtown office workers offers nouvelle Asian cuisine, with specialties like shabu shabu and barbecue cooked on a unique smoke-free induction-heat table. The brick and stucco design is intended to represent Silk Road cul-

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Photograph by Steffen Thalemann.

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ture. Pretheater menu available, and jackets are required for dinner. *Vanderbilt Ave. bet. 43rd St. and 44th Sts. (973-0461). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Century Cafe—Theater-district café popular among actors and fans alike, with a prix fixe menu and American fare like filet mignon and grilled salmon. *132 W. 43rd St. (398-1988). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Champagne's—This elegant midtown respite has a European flair and features Continental fare along the ritzy lines of caviar, lobster-and-avocado salad, and braised monkfish stuffed with smoked salmon. Dancing and live music nightly; jacket required. *20 W. 55th St. (639-9460). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castle-like setting, with ceiling-high murals painted in 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *63 W. 54th St. (247-1200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

D'Angelo—This casual Italian establishment offers all the usual favorites, from a dozen varieties of pasta to more elaborate creations like shrimp Catalina. Well-situated for pre- or post-theater dining. *242 W. 56th St. (307-0700). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ed Sullivan's—This restaurant's nostalgic location in the landmarked Ed Sullivan Theater informs its classic style, with "Hollywood" booths, 30-foot ceilings, and mahogany bars. The American menu—well-priced as a $21.95 pretheater prix fixe—offers such hearty fare as surf-and-turf and pan-seared scallops with truffle mashed potatoes. Live jazz and blues performed nightly. *1697 Broadway, nr. 53rd St. (541-1697). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Ellen's Stardust Diner—A tribute to that archetype of mid-century American gastronomy, this themey diner serves up iconic nourishment, from "Mom's meatloaf platter" to "grilled chicken T-bird" salad. *1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (956-5151). (I) AE, DC, MC.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Java Shop—A full-service coffee shop, offering takeout and waiter service. The American menu includes Belgian waffles, oven-baked fried chicken, salads, and breakfast served all day long. Charles Morris Mount created a sleek, contemporary design, with a java-influenced color scheme. *1611 Broadway, at 49th St. (246-1960). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

JUdson Grill—Bustling space in midtown office tower with surprisingly inventive American grill food and a bar scene to rival most. *152 W. 52nd St. (582-5252). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," and with the accomplished Lincoln Carson replacing pastry chef Richard Leach, the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Primavera—Theater-district Northern Italian offering prix fixe dinners and house specials like veal porcini, fettuccine salmonati, and scallopine con porcini. *234 W. 48th St. (586-2797). (E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offer-

Data

Feasts of Freedom

The Streitz's matzoh displayed so prominently in supermarkets this season suggests that Passover is a holiday of meager abstinence, a sort of milder Yom Kippur. But in fact, the annual commemoration of the Jewish exodus from Egypt is a celebration of liberation, and the seders that mark the first two nights of the eight-day holiday are elaborate, symbolic feasts. Perhaps this is why Passover inspires such feelings of nostalgia in even the most secular Jews, a phenomenon that chef Peter Hoffman noticed when his non-kosher, gourmet seders at Savoy began selling out months in advance. While most kosher restaurants will be closed in observance, those remaining open—plus a surprising number of non-Jewish ones—offer a warm ambiance and astounding variety. Urban seders come in three distinct styles—Ashkenazic, featuring Eastern European–style gefilte fish and matzoh balls; Sephardic, incorporating the Mediterranean cuisine of Jews descended from Spain, northern Africa and the Middle East; and what can only be called New York, an entirely unorthodox hybrid. Robin Raisfeld

Campagna's Jewish-Italian New York–style Passover dinner.

RESTAURANT	SEDER SPECIFICS
THE LOBSTER CLUB 24 East 80th Street; 249-6500	No organized seder per se, but chef Anne Rosenzweig will offer a dozen Passover-inspired dishes—red-snapper gefilte fish, matzoh brei with smoked salmon and dill, roast chicken with sweet-potato-and-rhubarb tsimmes—á la carte all next week.
CAMPAGNA 24 East 21st Street; 460-0900	Mark Strausman, a New York Jew in a Tuscan restaurant, offers his annual Italian "seder" of roasted lamb with artichokes, chicken dumplings alla Romana, Hayman's chicken broth with rice artichokes, matzoh, and egg drops, and Tuscan chicken-liver paté. $65.
TAVERN ON THE GREEN Central Park West at 67th Street; call Levana, 877-8457	Catered by nearby Levana restaurant, the Central Park Tavern seder includes the presence of a "seder conductor," plus upscale renditions of standards like whitefish-and-salmon gefilte fish wrapped in dill and leeks, chicken consommé with quennelles of matzoh, and chicken-and-veal-stuffed Cornish hen. $100; $65 for children.
PASTRAMI KING 124-24 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens; 718-263-1717	Full Passover packages available for takeout include, instead of pastrami, quarts of matzoh-ball or vegetable soup, pounds of chopped liver, brisket with gravy, stuffed cabbage, potato pudding, and cranberry compote. $119.95 for eight; $149.95 for twelve.
SAVOY 70 Prince Street; 219-8570	The seders are sold out, but from April 22 through 26, a rotating menu of Sephardic specialties is available upstairs in the prix fixe dining room. Particularly delicious-sounding dishes include spicy lamb stew with lentils, grilled quail with pickled eggplant, tuna in phyllo with capers, olives, and coriander, and rouget with raisins, pine nuts, and rosemary pasta. $48.

Photograph by Minh + Wass.

ing generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops, and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lattanzi—Reliable Italian in a romantic garden. Go when there's no danger of a curtain rising or falling soon for special attention. *361 W. 46th St. (315-0980). (M) AE only.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Le Rivage—Pretheater bistro: reasonable prices, efficient service, and satisfying fare. *340 W. 46th St. (765-7374). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and posttheater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Osteria al Doge—Cheerful restaurant in the theater district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes frito misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Patsy's—If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you. Upscale Neapolitan eatery rooted in the glorious fifties. *236 W. 56th St. (247-3491). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster, mesclun, and julienned vegetables. *321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room opens to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, mint-touched carpaccio of yellowfin-tuna mignon, and swordfish steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

T.G.I. Friday's—When you crave the familiar, this casual American chain provides predictably decent grub like burgers, steaks, pastas, and potato skins. *761 Seventh Ave., at 50th St. (767-8350). Also, seven other Manhattan locations. (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

'21' Club—The new, old, younger '21' has lost its hauteur at the door but not its toys in the artfully restored saloon. Club classics alongside contemporary whimsy at prices that stagger, but from 10:30, supper is a bargain. *21 W. 52nd St. (582-7200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—Until the fall, this is as close to Cuba as you can get—at least in this neighborhood. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Café Botanica—This American restaurant in the Essex House hotel is an airy, plant-filled respite from the congestion of Central Park South. Sunday brunch is a neighborhood fixture; at night, sample the chef's renditions of poached tuna Niçoise and rack of lamb. *160 Central Park So. (484-5120). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Dawat—You can't miss with tandoori—cooked before your eyes in the big ovens in the back—or with any of the more unusual regional specials. Actress and cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey is responsible for the very popular and wide-ranging menu. *210 E. 58th St. (355-7555). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home at I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mickey Mantle's—A sleek sports bar and restaurant with an art gallery, the requisite TV monitors, and a collection of vintage baseball jerseys. Features American cuisine like hickory-smoked baby back ribs, chicken-fried steak, and grilled swordfish. *42 Central Park So. (688-7777). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Arizona 206—Innovative southwestern, situated amid a cluster of movie theatres, and spitting distance from Bloomingdale's. Adobelike setting with fireplace and active sort-of-singles bar. Ideal spot for a drink or a feast. *206 E. 60th St. (838-0440). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

The Boathouse Cafe—This is a glorious oasis in Central Park where you'll find an array of seasonal specialties like grilled swordfish with basil mashed potatoes and pan-roasted Moroccan crusted salmon. For postprandial excitement, rent a rowboat or a gondola. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Cafe Pierre—The next best thing to room service is this warm, intimate dining room. Serving contemporary French cuisine, this is the perfect elegant spot to enjoy good food and discreet conversation. Plus piano entertainment, starting at nine Tuesday through Saturday. *2 E. 61st St., in the Hotel Pierre (940-8195). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Campagnola—Country-style Italian fare for the neighborhood—the whole neighborhood. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

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room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Ici—A relative newcomer among the countless Upper East Side bistros, Ici has made a name for itself with well-executed French fare—like the appetizer of Dungeness-crab risotto with glazed salmon—and a fashionably chic clientele. *19 E. 69th St. (794-6419). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Isle of Capri—Three steps away from the hustle and bustle of Bloomingdale's, here's a cozy Italian spot that's been around for 40 years, serving specialties like pappardelle con porcini and trippa alla Calabrese. *1028 Third Ave., at 61st St. (223-9430). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Italian that treats everyone like a local. The food is drawn from all regions; the red snapper with fresh vegetables is a standout, as are the homemade desserts, and the wine list has won awards. Live piano music nightly. *1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

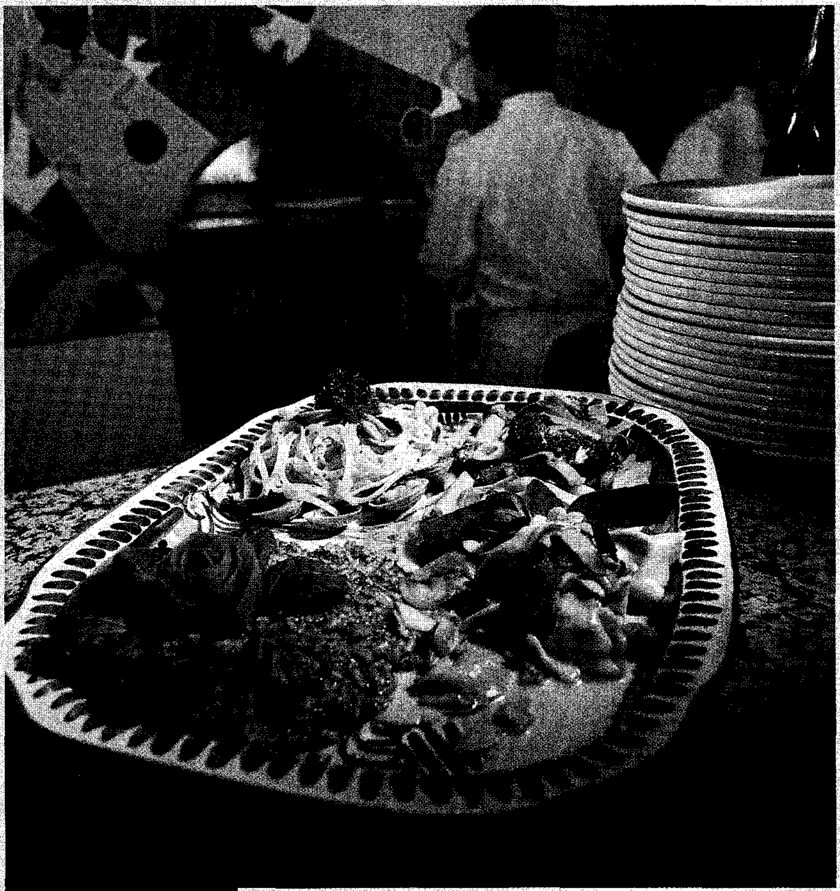
Marti Turkish Restaurant—Kebabs 'R' Us, and the stuffed cabbage is good, too. A dining room that seats 200 people, complete with live music and wandering belly dancers. There is also a "special party room." *1269 First Ave., nr. 68th St. (737-5922). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

One Fish Two Fish—Fish is the theme here. Everything—shrimp parmigiana, steamers, quarter-pound Maine lobster—comes with as much salad and garlic bread as you can eat. *1399 Madison Ave., at 97th St. (369-5677). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the *haute* neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*



ASK GAEL

Decisions, Decisions

Don't tax your brain. Just order the gran misto pasta platter ($22) at Salute!. Noodles in Godmotherly-generous portions make a lunch or a starter for two, three, or even four. Atolls of pappardelle in a ragu of green vegetables, potato gnocchi in a mushroom salsa, and veal-plumped agnolotti (or whatever the chef's whimsy dictates) arrive on a big ceramic platter. The $12 sampling of gelati and sorbetti is equally excessive: ten full-size scoops. Best book early. There's a stampede at lunchtime. (270 Madison Avenue, at 39th Street.)

Toraya—A Japanese teahouse offering an enticing assortment of confections, green teas, and desserts. *17 E. 71st St. (861-1700). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Trattoria Libertá—This Italian trattoria specializes in homemade pasta, and commemorates everybody's favorite outdoor artwork with a Statue of Liberty crown motif. *1574 Second Ave. nr. 81st St. (772-0752). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Tucci—This rustic Italian trattoria near Bloomingdale's is a good place for recharging after an afternoon of shopping or a double feature. The brick-oven pizza is a crowd-pleaser; the daily risotto and fish specials and the homemade pasta appeal to heartier appetites. *206 E. 63rd St. (355-9100). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Bella Luna—Consistently good neighborhood Northern Italian, with rotating art exhibits and a seasonal antipasto table. *584 Columbus Ave., nr. 88th St. (877-2267). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel—*and* a completely au courant sushi bar. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Iridium Jazz Club—The American food in this subterranean jazz club will satisfy high and low cravings for everything from lobster to fried chicken. *44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Main Street—This lofty dining room with a skylit atrium and general-store décor is a great place for large parties (or hungry couples) dining family-style on enormous platters of meat loaf, terrines of macaroni and cheese, and trays of filet mignon au poivre. Bring an appetite. *446 Columbus Ave., nr. 81st St. (873-5025). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Merlot Bar and Grill—The overwrought, fantastic architecture of what was formerly Iridium restaurant has been converted into this toned-down homage to the grape Merlot, of which there are 50 varieties. Representative French-American menu items include Brie en croute and salmon with lobster potatoes. *48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Pasha—The Turkish food served here—octopus salad, grilled quail, lamb chops, artichokes in olive oil—suits quite well the current craze for all things Mediterranean. Both the stucco-walled dining room and a separate room for smokers are casually intimate. *70 W. 71st St. (579-8751). (M) AE only.*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

West 63rd Street Steakhouse—Mahogany tables and red suede walls make this nice-ified steakhouse less stultifying than its midtown brethren. Twenty-foot ceilings allow for a spectacular view of Lincoln Center, and there are seafood and pasta for those who enjoy the company of a meat-eater. *44 W. 63rd St. (246-6363). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Lundy Bros.—A restored Brooklyn landmark serving a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializing in fresh seafood. Don't miss the raw bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Photograph by Warren Salowe.

in concert

Previn conducts the Philharmonic...Wagner's *Siegfried*...Jessye Norman

Classical Music

Tuesday, April 15

Schoenberg and His French Contemporaries—The Israeli Virtuosi Chamber Ensemble performs works by Schoenberg, Debussy, Ravel, and Dukas. *Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. (423-3224), at 6:30; $15.*

Chamber Music at the Y—The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio performs Brahms. *The 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. (996-1100), at 8; $25.*

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Performs works by Brahms, Schubert, and Schumann, and a chamber version of Druckman's *Counterpoise. Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 7:30; $22–$30.*

Wednesday, April 16

The Guarneri String Quartet—Performs works by Bartok, Dvórak, and Mozart. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $30.*

Chamber Music at the Y—see 4/15.

Krystian Zimmerman, Pianist—Performs Beethoven, Haydn, and Schubert. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17–$65.*

Thursday, April 17

Bargemusic—Works by Beethoven, Brahms, and Puccini. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $15–$23.*

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra—Performs works by Debussy, Dutilleux, and Tchaikovsky; Yakov Kreizberg, conductor. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $17.50.*

Nicole Rose, Oboist—Performs works by Bach and Crumb. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $10.*

New York Philharmonic—Performs works by Haydn, Mozart, Ravel, and Previn; Andre Previn, conductor. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $15–$65.*

Friday, April 18

Music in the Time of Tiepolo—Works by Vivaldi, in conjunction with the museum's Giambattista Tiepolo exhibit; Rinaldo Alessandrini, conductor. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave. (222-4843), at 8; $20.*

Alfred Bendel, Pianist—Performs works by Busoni, Liszt, Schumann, and Haydn. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $18–$70.*

New York Philharmonic—See 4/17.

Saturday, April 19

Dalia Lazar, Pianist—Performs works by Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 2; $10.*

New York Chamber Symphony—Performs concertos by Lazarof and Kernis as well as works by Bach and Verdi. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $30.*

Dudley Moore, Host—The Orchestra of Music for All Seasons performs Brahms, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf,* and Moore. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 7:30; $15–$90.*

Sunday, April 20

Jessye Norman, Soprano—Performs new works, as well as Brahms, Schubert, and Poulenc. *Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (247-7800), at 5; $18–$75.*

Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Pianist—Performs works by Debussy and Liszt. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 3; $15–$35.*

West Village Chorale—Performs works by Beveridge, Levine, and Mendelssohn, with tenor Alberto Mizrahi. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $20.*

Bridge Contemporary Music Series II—New European and American music by Rovern, Darbellay, Hardish, others. *Roerich Museum, 319 W. 107th St. (864-7752), at 5; free.*

Ensemble America—A Juilliard group performs Tchaikovsky, Vivaldi, and works by South American composers. *The Landon Gallery, 1926 Broadway (362-0857), at 2:30; free.*

New York Chamber Symphony—See 4/19, at 5.

Bargemusic—See 4/17, at 4.

Monday, April 21

Venus & Adonis—The Clarion Music Society performs this work by John Blow, a contemporary of Purcell. *The Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse, 68th St. and Lexington Ave. (772-4448), at 8; $20.*

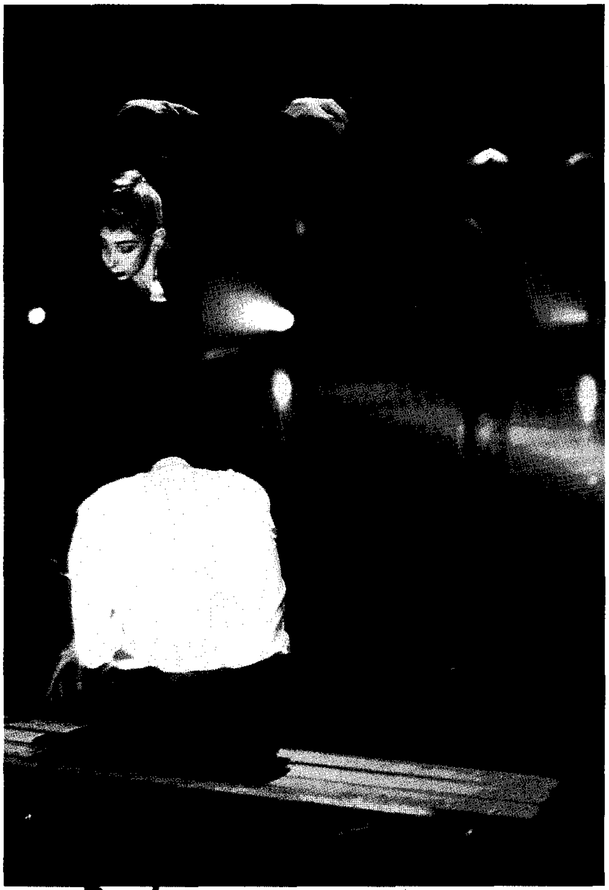
Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Gounod's *Faust,* 4/15 and 4/18 at 8; Puccini's *Madame Butterfly,* 4/16 at 7:30; Wagner's *Die Walkure,* 4/17 at 6:30; Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin,* 4/19 at 12:30; Wagner's *Siegfried,* 4/19 at 6. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $23–$250.*

New York City Opera—Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado,* 4/15 at 8; Von Einem's *Visit of the Old Lady,* 4/16 at 8; Verdi's *Rigoletto,* 4/18 at 8; Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins,* 4/19 at 1:30, and Puccini's *Turandot* at 8; Mozart's *Don Giovanni,* 4/20 at 1:30. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (870-5570); $18–$82.*



Previews

Modern Love

It must be spring: Sex—repressed, thwarted, straining in an arranged marriage—is the prime mover in Ballet Preljocaj's debut performance at the Joyce (April 15–20).

Dance

Ballet Preljocaj—Performs *Annonciation, Le Spectre de la Rose,* and *Noces,* 4/17–4/20 at 2 and 8. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave. (242-0800); $30.*

Ben Munisteri—Performs *Freak-Boy Jones and the Mother Natures,* 4/18 and 4/19 at 8. *Squid, 42 Ann St.; $5.*

Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts—Performs *A Celebration of Dance,* 4/19 at 8 and 4/20 at 2. *Whitman Theater, Brooklyn College (718-951-4500).*

Mark Morris—Performs *In Honor of the Divine Lou Harrison,* 4/15 and 4/20 at 8, 4/18 at 3, and *Gloria,* 4/17 and 4/19 at 8, 4/20 at 2. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100); $15–$45.*

Photograph by K. Westenberg.

nightlife

Karen Akers . . . Värttinä . . . Milton Berle Lives!

Concerts

Hossein Alizadeh & Kayhan Kalhor—Purveyors of Persian music. 4/20 at 8 P.M. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (545-7536). $25.*

Bruce Cockburn—Cut from the same cloth as fellow Canadians the Band (both artistically speaking and in terms of his rugged constitution), Cockburn's spent twenty-plus years making some of the most stirring folk-rock on the planet. 4/19 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $22.50–$32.50.*

Leo Kottke/Iris DeMent—Fiftysomething fingerpicking virtuoso Kottke shares the bill with the more youthful but no less talented DeMent, whose haunting confessions and meditations have already won her a place in folk's big leagues. 4/20 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (307-7171). $29.50–$32.50.*

Barry Manilow—What's your favorite part of "Copa Cabana"? Ours is the bit when the backup singers hit a pitch well above normal human-female range as they wail "Co-pa *Cabaaaaa-naaa!!*" shortly after the song's diamond-wearing protagonist, Rico, gets shot. Here's hoping Manilow's still got an intrepid crew with him. 4/16–4/20 at 8 P.M. *Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Avenue of the Americas, at 50th St. (307-7171). $32–$52.*

John Mellencamp—Indiana's favorite son has gained more and more respect and mainstream credibility the further he's distanced himself from his former incarnation as "John Cougar." If you ask us, though, the tank-tops-'n'-Hogs image of his "Hurts So Good" days was vastly superior to his current, more grown-up shtick. On the other hand, imagine the embarrassment of seeing a middle-aged man parading around in a sleeveless denim jacket. With Amanda Marshall and the Why Store. 4/12–4/15 at 8 P.M. *The Theater at Madison Square Garden. (307-7171). $50–$65.*

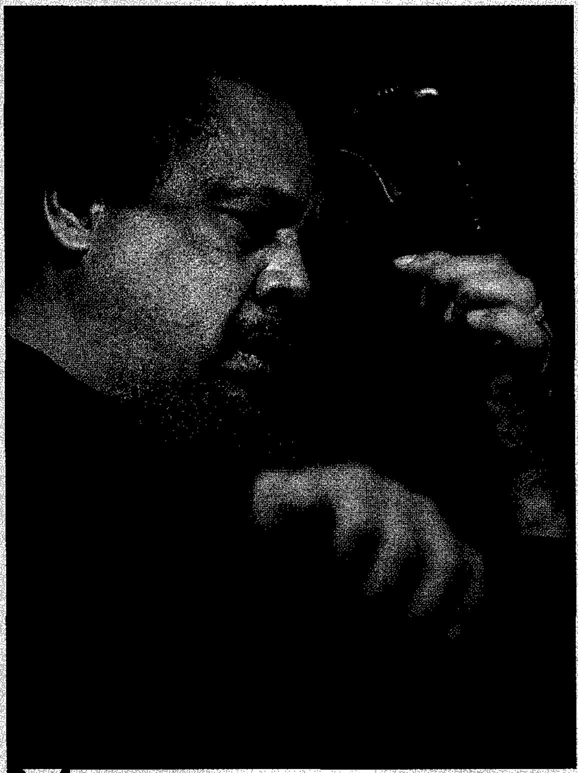
Morphine—The sparest and gruffest lineup around, this Boston three-piece represents the best in moody, Kurt Weill–influenced rock. Backed by his own two-string bass, a baritone sax, and a sharp, minimalistic drummer, frontman Mark Sandman rasps *noir*-ish tales of murder, alienation, and urban anomie over alternately surging and shuffling drones. Bad to the bone; good for the soul. With Wooden Leg. 4/17 at 7 P.M. *Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (307-7171). $15.*

The Neville Brothers—New Orleans' first family of soul. 4/23 at 8 P.M. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (840-2824). $35–$45.*

Purna Das Baul & Bapi—Mystical folk music of Bengal. With Badal Roy. 4/19 at 8 P.M. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (545-7536). $18.*

John Tesh—Fresh from spearheading PBS's most successful fund-raising drive ever, the erstwhile *Entertainment Tonight* host serves up syrupy synth-heavy instrumentals that, if we didn't know better, we'd call New Age. Being a Christian, however, Tesh deplores the attribution of such quasi-pagan motives to his art, and suggests that it be classified otherwise—as, say, some compromise between pop and white-wine jazz. A rose by any other name . . . 4/22 at 8 P.M. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Avenue, at 57th Street. (247-7800). $20–$50.*

Värttinä—These ten pop-crazy Finns perform arrangements of their homeland's traditional songs that set bubbly, folkie melodies to gurgling, danceable beats. On paper, it sounds like a recipe for disaster, but the music is actually fantastically catchy. A Nordic version of late-eighties B-52's—fun, frothy, and educational! 4/19 at 8 P.M. *Arts at St. Ann's, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn (718-858-2424). $20–$25.*



Performance

Mingus Madness

The Mingus Big Band (see listings) has had some pretty unusual sidemen at their regular Thursday-night Fez gig lately: Elvis Costello one night and Joni Mitchell another. In honor of Charles Mingus's 75th birthday (April 22), the Jazz Workshop is commissioning songwriters, Costello among them, to set lyrics to some of the late bassist-composer's works. And though an album of these re-jiggered tunes isn't due for months, rumors abound of yet more upcoming drop-ins—including Tony Bennett and that famously swingin' cat Bruce Springsteen.

Photograph by Veryl Oakland/Retna.

Clubland

Acme Underground—The club formerly known as Under Acme, renovated and reborn as New York City's classiest small rock venue. 4/16: Hooked on Sonics; Johnny Chan & the New Dynasty Six. 4/17: Blend; Project Nim; Tower Recordings; Pelt. 4/18: Gorgon; Illness; Donner Party. *9 Great Jones St., downstairs (420-1934). $.*

Arlene Grocery—The Lower East Side's newish, hip-ish, and appealingly inexpensive (okay, free) rock and folk venue. 4/15: Hamell on Trial; Lo Gallocia; Joy Askew. 4/18: The hilarious Life in a Blender (request "Chicken Dance"); Brenda Kahn. 4/19: Talking to Animals; Jennifer Jackson. 4/22: Deni Bonet; Joy Askew; Sunshine Club. *95 Stanton St. (358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 4/15: Greg Brown; Kate Campbell. 4/17: The Silos; Francis Dunnery. 4/18: Ed Palermo & His Big Band play the music of Frank Zappa. 4/19: Christine Lavin; Pete Nelson. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9. 4/16: Star City; Debbie Schwartz; Big House. 4/17: Miracle Legion; Sugarplant; Brilliantine. 4/18: Big Mouth; Oral Groove; Johnny Skilsaw. 4/19: Barry White Boys. 4/21: Pee Shy; Joe. 4/22: Scout. 4/23: Kristen Berry. *169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. 4/15: No Name James. 4/16: Bob Gaddy & Robert Ross. 4/17: Sweet Georgia Brown. 4/18: "Ladies Sing the Blues." Big Time Sarah; Zora Young; Shemekia Copeland. 4/21: Larry Talbot & Wolfpack. 4/22: David Phelps. 4/23: Voodoo Rhythm Kings. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's, uh, cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. Check out the monthly "Havana-A-Go-Go" (4/19), which turns the place into a Ricky Ricardo fan's dream come true, complete with free cha-cha lessons. 4/16: Tree; Stillsuit; Kilgore Smudge. 4/17: Jane Jensen; Frogpond. 4/18: NY Loose; Vasquez; Killer Kowalski. 4/19: The Dickies. 4/20: Modern English. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

The Cooler—The meatpacking district's subterranean, steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti

Smith photo. 4/17: Koo Lade; G'nu Fuzz. 4/18: Skadanks; Ras Shiloh. 4/19: Daddy Longhead. 4/21: Dean Bowman; Xenophelia; Josh Roseman; the Antidote. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush faux-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today, or ever. Hidden beneath the Time Cafe, Fez takes some ambition and assertiveness to access on a crowded night. Every Wednesday, Fez presents "Stella: An Evening of Big Room Comedy," featuring members of MTV's late, lamented *The State* and other cutups. 4/25: Toshi Reagon. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—Rebecca Blasband, who's just released an album on Mercury records, is already famous. You just don't know it yet, because you remember her as "Becky," a controversial cast member on the first season of MTV's long-running soap opera-vérité, *The Real World* (she's the one who had an affair with the show's director during filming). Blasband, now a "singer-songwriter," opens for Fountains of Wayne and Sloan, 4/16. 4/15: The Samples. 4/17: INXS are back! 4/18: Jupiter Coyote; Acoustic Junction. 4/19–4/20: Kula Shaker. Eastern melodies meet arena-rock riffing—like, wow. 4/23: Sneaker Pimps. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—Lately, some of the sixties' strangest and most truly obscure acts have been resurfacing to levels of adulation they never dreamed of attaining their first time out. Like New York's own Silver Apples, who have made a small number of appearances since last fall, Texan experimental-rockers the Red Krayola have found a niche among a new generation of hipsters (like Gastr del Sol and the Rachel's Band) weaned on hard-to-find albums like *God Bless the Red Krayola.* Krayola's head weirdo, Mayo Thompson, has actually teamed up with some of those youthful admirers for recent studio ventures, and for this tour, his first in three years. They play 4/19. 4/15: Lisa Germano; Melissa Ferrick. 4/16–4/17: Andy Statman Quartet, "Music of the Jewish Mystics." 4/18: Skizm; El Caminos; Viper House. 4/20: Cindy Lee Berryhill. 4/21: Pachora; Tito's Revenge; Matt Darriau's Paradox Trio; Wolfgang Muthspiel & Marc Johnson. 4/22–4/24: For those who just can't give up the nightlife, even during family-oriented holidays, the Knitting Factory hosts traditional second, third, and fourth seders. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).*

Mercury Lounge—Richard Davies, who plays 4/19, writes quirky, catchy pop nuggets as delightful as anything his role models (David Bowie and Paul McCartney, among many others) have penned. The moderately eccentric Aussie has released albums with the bands Cardinal and the Moles, as well as on his own, and they're all worth seeking out. However, the real thrill is to see his exuberant, off-kilter live act. 4/16: Ditchcroaker; 44; Coward. 4/17: Mini King; Candy Butchers; Sky Blue. 4/18: Phono-Comb; the Sadies. 4/21: Papas Fritas; Happy Bunny. 4/23: Lori Carson; Ida; Knox Chandler. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

New Music Cafe—Within spitting distance of the Holland Tunnel, this middlebrow TriBeCa hang serves up more than its share of jammy, 'Dead-indebted sounds. Thursdays are an exception, when the jammy, P-Funk-indebted sounds of Giant Step take over. 4/15: Ben Watt of Everything But the Girl spins drum-and-bass platters. *380 Canal St., at West Broadway. (941-1019).*

Sounds of Brazil—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 4/15: Yami Bolo; Jah Faith. 4/17: Boozoo Chavez. 4/18: Abstract Truth; Tabou Combo. 4/19: Juliana Aquino; Manhattan Samba Group. 4/20: New York Tango Trio (free lessons from 6 to 7 P.M.). 4/21: Eddie Palmieri. 4/22: Culture; Michael Mafiano. 4/23: Culture; Enchantaz. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Talent

Akey Brakey

Stop crying over I.R.S. greed and get into some real *heartbreak. The fabulously torchy diva Karen Akers begins a monthlong engagement at Rainbow and Stars April 15.*

Photograph by Paul Greco.

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. 4/21: The Brand New Heavies. 4/22: Boz Scaggs. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high-concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 4/17: Morris Day & the Time. 4/18–4/19: Dr. John; Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. 4/21: W.A.S.P. 4/22: DJ Shadow; Jeru the Damaja. (The previous evening, Shadow spins at East 4th Street's Other Music. Bring in a record and the Bay Area D.J. promises to include it in the mix.) *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Westbeth Theatre—The West Side's midsize, mid-priced rock venue, which makes up for some unfortunately placed columns with the pleasant addition of a sultry bar and lounge. 4/22: Kenny Lattimore. *151 Bank St. (691-2272).*

Wetlands—Not many bandleaders could pull off sets that include Dizzy Gillespie's "Groovin' High," Miles Davis's "So What," and James Brown's "Give It Up or Turn It Loose." Other than timbale wizard Pucho, whose Latin Soul Brothers play here 4/17, probably none could deliver said tunes convincingly *and* keep the entire room dancing through the whole thing. But dance they do at Pucho's thrilling shows: A recent performance at S.O.B.'s saw the weeknight crowd still getting down hard at 3 A.M. 4/16: Mad Professor & the Robotiks Band. 4/18: Mighty Blue Kings; Mojo Nixon. 4/19: Fatbag; Moon Boot Lover; Schleigho. 4/20: "Breaking Point." DJ's Wally & Swingsett; Indelibles. 4/23: Lyricists' Lounge presents "Soulstation," with Q-Tip of A Tribe Called Quest. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Jazz

Birdland—A roomy bandstand overlooking a classy boîte as suggestive of Big Band–era elegance as the club's name. The jazz restaurant is recently relocated from its uptown outpost. 4/16–4/19: the Billy Childs Quintet, featuring Terence Blanchard. 4/20: NYU Jazz Sextet. 4/21: Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. 4/22: The Philadelphia Heritage Art Ensemble plays the music of Lee Morgan and Hank Mobley. 4/23–4/26: the John Hicks Quintet, featuring Bobby Watson. *315 W. 44th St., bet. Eighth and Ninth Aves. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a great view from every seat in the house (the standing-room area at the bar's not bad, either), the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. 4/15–4/20: McCoy Tyner Big Band. 4/21: Elisabeth Kontomanou & Her Trio; Stéphane Belmondo Quartet. 4/22–4/27: Joao Bosco; Leo Gandelman Group. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Iridium Room—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. One of the latter, the great guitar innovator Les Paul, has moved his Monday-night office hours here after the closing of his longtime haunt, Fat Tuesday's. 4/15–4/20: George Howard. 4/22–4/27: Michel Camilo Trio. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. Every Monday in April: the Renee Rosnes Trio. 4/16–4/19: James Williams, Ron Carter, and Tony Redus. 4/23–4/26: Valerie Capers and John Robinson. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay what you wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. While no amount of imagination can render the institutional, linoleum tile-decor any more inviting than your average mass feed-trough, the concept *is* fairly happening. 4/18: the Ron Horton Ensemble plays the music of Andrew Hill (next Friday, Hill himself plays solo). *11 W. 53rd St. (708-0480).*

Showman's Cafe—Harlem's subtly wonderful jazz club, where you can always get a table and the jukebox is one of the best in the city. Sets at 10 P.M., midnight, and 2 A.M. No cover; two-drink minimum. 4/18–4/19: Lonnie Youngblood & the Blood Brothers. *2321 Eighth Ave., bet. 124th and 125th Sts. (864-8941). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. Every Monday, the Jason Lindner Big Band. Tuesdays, the Omer Avital Sextet. 4/16–4/17: Brian Lynch Quintet, featuring Al Foster. 4/18–4/19: Tim Sessions Sextet, featuring Kurt Rosenwinkle. 4/23: Orrin Evans Quartet. Shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Every Sunday, Doc Cheatham plays from 2 to 6. Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. 4/15–4/20: Jane Ira Bloom Quartet. 4/22–4/27: Chico Freeman Quintet. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Village Gate—Jazz and swing dancing nightly, from 10 P.M. to 2:30 A.M. Every Wednesday, the Roy Gerson Swing Band gets 'em jumping. 4/16–4/19 and 4/23: Roy Gerson Swing Band. $10 cover; two-drink minimum. *240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 4/15–4/20: Wessell Anderson Quintet. 4/22–4/27: Charles McPherson Quartet. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M. and 1 A.M. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Zinc Bar—A tiny subterranean hideout, sheltered from bustling Houston Street by heavy red drapes. Weeknights, sets at 10 P.M., midnight, and 2 A.M.; weekends at 11 P.M. and 12:30 and 2 A.M. Mondays, the Ron Affif Trio presides. Fridays: Raf Astor's flamenco band. Saturdays: Marianne Ebert's Brazilian-jazz quartet. 4/15: Chardavoine Band. 4/16: Randy Johnston Trio. 4/17: Jay Rodriguez Quartet. 4/22–4/23: Dave Kikoski Electric Jazz Trio. *90 W. Houston St. (477-8337). $.*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—Animal House ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Sundays: "All Star Comedy." Mondays: Open-mike night. Tuesdays: Eric Deskin hosts "Premium Smoke," a night of—no joke—cigars and comedy. Wednesdays: "Women of Comedy." Thursdays: "Chupacabra Night," with Arnold Acevedo. Fridays and Saturdays, the club promises "the country's top comedians." Shows are at 9:30. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).*

Caroline's Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 4/15: Lionel from *Talk Radio.* 4/16: Sarge; Michael DeLorenzo. 4/17–4/20: John Mulrooney. 4/17: The Elementals. 4/22: Salsoul; Unusable Suspects. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$18.50, two-drink minimum.*

Catch a Rising Star—The high-class variety show-place is in the process of broadening its focus from straight stand-up to a mix of sketch and alternative comedy, theater, and musical performances. Visitors to the Catch Bar & Grill can view all of the above at "The Loft," a stage set as a N.Y.C. apartment. Mondays, "Monday Night Fool's Ball," a stand-up, sketch, and music revue. Tuesdays are new-talent nights. Shows Mon. and Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Wed. and Thurs. at 9 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11 P.M. *253 West 28th St., bet. Seventh and Eighth Aves. (244-3005).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. 4/14–4/20: Wanda Sykes-Hall; Jim David; Mitch Fatel; Rick Crom; Vic Hanley. 4/21–4/27: Greg Fitzsimmons; Greer Barnes; Greg Rogell; Jeff Ross; William Stephenson; Greg Giraldo. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 9 P.M., 10:45 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun–Thurs. at 9 P.M. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. 4/14–4/20: Greg Rogell; Jerry Diner; Vic Di Betteto; Quentin Heggs; Nancy Redman; Lenny Varnedoe; Jim Norton. 4/21–4/27: John Rizzo; Joe Mulligan; Nancy Redman; Lenny Varnedoe; Ben Creed; Quentin Heggs; Jim Norton. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and, at 3300 square feet, palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. 4/18–4/19: Vanessa Hollingshead; Eric Kornfeld; Rich Francese; Al Lubel. Sun., Mon., and Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Thurs. at 8:30 and 11 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11:30 P.M. Cover is $12 plus two-drink minimum Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. *34 West 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Through 5/3: The gifted, subtle, and engaging singer Weslia Whitfield's "Teach Me Tonight: Songs of Sammy Cahn and Others." Tues.–Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7); Fri.–Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). $35; $15 minimum. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800, extension 154).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta (frequently shoulder to shoulder *and* bolder to bolder), is the keynote of this Village landmark. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Barbara Cook. Tues.–Sat. at 8:45 and 10:45 P.M. $45; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Dutch Weisman's "Sinners"—A spectacularly un-p.c., quaintly anti-family-values replacement for Weisman's un-p.c., anti-family-values "Winter Follies." Like the previous revue, "Sinners" is replete with showgirls, high living, and low comedy. Wednesday and Thursday at 9 P.M.; Friday and Saturday at 11, with live music and dancing after the show. *108 W. 18th St. (645-7045). $30.*

Eighty-Eight's—4/19: Steven Kowalczyk. $12, with a two-drink minimum. *228 W. 10th St. (924-0088).*

Maxim's—Midtown's monument to hefty art-nouveau interior design and hefty French-bistro fare. Every Monday, Maxim's national talent search. 4/17–4/19: Carol Sloane sings "Songs Sinatra Sang." $20–$30 cover. *680 Madison Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (751-5111).*

Rainbow and Stars—4/15–5/10: Karen Akers. Sunday nights, Rainbow hosts a rotating lineup of songwriters. 3/16: Marcia Lewis, "On the Road to *Chicago.*" 3/23: Debbie Gravitte, "MGM, Menken, and More." 4/20: David Friedman. $25 cover. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 11 P.M.; dinner required at early shows. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

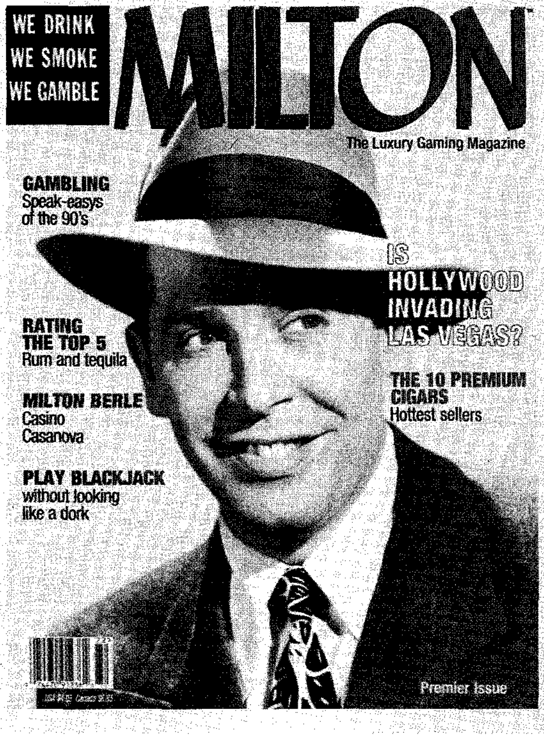
Ed Sullivan's—Tucked practically inside the Ed Sullivan Theater, the old-man bar turned chichi dining spot offers swing jazz nightly and a waiter who looks just like the place's namesake. Tuesdays and Wednesdays in April: The Ed Swanston Trio. Thursdays: The Ed Swanston Trio. Every Friday, Sullivan's is home to the Harlem All-Stars. 4/19: The Blues Jumpers. No cover; two-drink minimum Fri. and Sat. *1697 Broadway, bet. 53rd and 54th Sts. (541-1697).*

Windows on the World—The "Greatest Bar on Earth" (or the loftiest, anyway) reanimates itself with a new Saturday-night theme-party series. Every Wednesday, DJ Lucien spins "lounge-core." 4/17: Groove Culture. 4/18: Flying Neutrinos. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (524-7000).*

In Print
Generation M

"I like to look at him as a mascot," Susan Moll says of the latest, strangest patron saint of nightlife. "We didn't want a publication where you feel it's coming from an 88-year-old perspective." To that end, Moll and her mother, Lorna Berle, edit and publish *Milton,* a new quarterly that brings cigars, spirits, and gaming to the young novice—all under the wildly anachronistic auspices of, yes, Milton Berle. Berle himself appears in the magazine's masthead as "President," but functions in its pages as a weirdly distant and omniscient Big Brother (or grandfather) here to preside over this new age of cigars, *Swingers,* and lounge culture. The premiere issue features an exposé of the new, thriving "speakeasy" scene: "Instead of a bunch of societal well-to-dos enjoying a round of illegal drinks, we have a bunch of Generation X–ers enjoying a round of illegal blackjack or poker." It also comes with advice on how the aspiring high roller should comport himself with the ladies: "[Show] less interest in your desire to date and/or boff your new prospect," advises sex columnist Glenn Schusterman. "This . . . will often lead to the very sex you hoped for." Lacking any prior publishing experience, Moll and her mother recruited friends and freelance writers to contribute. But it's precisely the amateurish level of discourse—coupled with the editors' odd notion that drinking and smoking are somehow youthful acts of transgression—that makes *Milton* bizarrely appealing. "*Milton's* about getting out there and taking a bet," Moll says, free of irony. "It's about people who aren't afraid. George Clooney—he's a Miltie! He jokes around, he has a lot of fun, he surrounds himself with fine things and beautiful women." It seems that Uncle Miltie is everywhere. "He has a huge celebrity, and it comes from his zest for life," Moll continues, finally offering the lexicon a new verb: "To party is to Miltie!"

MAUREEN CALLAHAN



mix

al?"...Auctioning Scaasi

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oby Kennedy and Walter Reuther.
you on?

wn (4/16; 9 to 11 P.M.; USA) stars
in a TV-movie version of the re-
fe story of a Billings, Montana,
nd mother who took on a home-
-like white-supremacy movement
nately shamed her neighbors into
ing about the rights and feelings of
ne local black church, the Native
American population, and the Jews
whose synagogue had been defaced. With Adam Arkin as her more cautious doctor-husband, Max Gail as a sympathetic sheriff, and Ed Begley Jr. as the hate-group Maximum Leader, this is the best sort of agitprop in TV's feel-good therapeutic mode. The actual Tammie Schnitzer, profiled in a *CBS Sunday Morning* cover story in 1993, was as impressive as Baker, which is to say she was terrific.

Leaving L.A. (Saturdays; 9 to 10 P.M.; ABC) is another of those oddball midseason try-outs I find myself liking without much hope that it will stick around after next month's sweeps. It's all about a coroner's office where they make *Quincy* jokes and talk to the dead. And the dead, at least through the medium of Anne Haney, sometimes talk back. So, as if someone had put up *Picket Fences* around *Northern Exposure,* talented actors like Ron Rifkin, Lorraine Toussaint, Chris Meloni, Melina Kanakaredes, Cress Williams, Hilary Swank, and Billie Worley traffic in murder suspects, dead rollers who die with their skates on, autopsy snapshots of Kurt Cobain and Natalie Wood, Vivaldi on a Walkman in the morgue, and the consoling thought that, no matter how many bodies they've got stashed in cold storage, 3,500 new babies are born each month in L.A.

Jerusalem: City of Heaven (4/20; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; Discovery) mixes up the standard, if stunning, footage of the Western Wall, the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher with interviews of longtime residents who say surprising things about this 5,000-year-old metropolis (of passion, violence, and ecstasy) and necropolis (for the martyrs of three different religions). Special attention is paid to the "Jerusalem syndrome," according to which perfectly ordinary visitors turn overnight into lunatics with a Messiah complex. And from the behavior of fratricidal Christians gathering for Easter, as much as from that of the bus-bombers and rubber-bullet brigades, you might very well decide that the shaman of Shangri-La is more civilized than anybody west of the Indian Ocean and north of Lake Victoria. Liam Neeson hosts.

The Coming Plague (4/20 and 4/27; 9 to 11 P.M.; TBS) is a four-hour whirlwind tour of the shifting medical front from Pakistan to West Africa, from Russia to Peru, from Bombay to Atlanta, in the company of the virus hunters and "disease cowboys" of the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control, tracking down and trying to contain Ebola, Dengue and Lassa fevers, malaria, smallpox, and, of course, AIDS. We are all citizens of one big "hot zone."

On the Edge of Innocence (4/20; 9 to 11 P.M.; NBC) allows Kellie Martin, always before typecast as some sort of Miss Super-Goody Categorical Imperative, to extend her range to include manic depression, which lands her in a psychiatric gulag, where she meets Lisa Jakub, an eating disorder unto herself, and James Marsden, who is inside because he has acted out once too often. After various abuses of patients by staff, these kids revolt, seize as a hostage the guiltiest of the shrinks (Kevin Dunn), and take off for Mexico with his stolen credit cards. There's some energy here, as if the movie had decided to deal with depression by being manic; and a ferris-wheel symbolism that actually works; and a persuasive resolution that averts the usual cheap-shot tragedy.

Radio Highlights

Casper Citron—4/19 at 10 P.M.: Richard Meryman on his book *Andrew Wyeth: A Secret Life;* Chris Kentis on his new film *Grind,* with his star Adrienne Shelley; Patricia Bosworth on "Anything

Benefit **Like many other top designers, Arnold Scaasi claims not to be interested in fashion: "I do not follow trends. . . . [My dresses] are timeless." Most Scaasi gowns, of course, have been very much of the moment, but his genius is such that one of his extravagant fifties pieces (say, the flower-printed silk-shantung three-quarter-sleeve evening dress he made for Lilly Pons) could be confidently worn today. Most women never get rid of their Scaasis, which is why Sotheby's first-ever public auction of his dresses (to benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation) is something of an event. (Gowns are from the collections of Elizabeth Taylor, Barbra Streisand, Joan Sutherland, and others. See listings.)**

Your Little Heart Desires"; Art D'Lugoff on the reopening of the Village Gate uptown. WOR, 710 AM.

Symphony Hall—Weeknights at 8. 4/16: Beethoven's *Egmont*, Op. 84, Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3 in A. 4/17: Boyce's Symphony in F. R. Strauss's *Don Quixote*. 4/18: Suppe's *Poet and Peasant Overture*, Gliere's Symphony No. 3 in B. 4/21: Weber's Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F; Thompson's Symphony No. 2 in E. 4/22: Elgar's Violin Concerto in B. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Texaco–Metropolitan Opera—4/19 at 12:30: *Eugene Onegin*. Galina Gorchakova, Mariana Tarasova, Vladmir Chemov, and Vladimir Ognovenko with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus. Antonio Pappano conducts. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

New York & Company—4/14: Dr. Ronald Ruden on *The Craving Brain*; Ann-Marie MacDonald on *Fall on Your Knees*; Claudia Bepko on *The Heart's Progress*; Paul Lukas on *Inconspicuous Consumption*. 4/15: Paige Rense, author of *Manor House*; Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone detail *Used and Rare*; Peter Stern and Andreas Brown on the joys and hazards of book buying. 4/16: Bill Paxton on his movie *Traveller*; Julie Kavner on her role in the play *God's Heart*; Pulitzer Prize winner John Sanford on *The Night Crew*; Ed Martin and Curt Smith on baseball; Tim Blake Nelson and Deena Juras on the independent film scene. 4/17: Tom Bower on *Nazi Gold*; Josh Siegel and Leonard Wolf, curators of the Museum of Modern Art's survey of vampire films; Mamphela Ramphele on *Across Boundaries*. 4/18: Monika Jensen-Stevenson on *Spite House*; Cissie Blumberg on *Remember the Catskills*. 4/21: Oliver Sacks on *The Island of the Colorblind*; Ann Colin on *Willie*; Dr. Stanley Greenspan on *The Growth of the Mind*; Lorraine Diehl on *The Late Great Pennsylvania Station*; Jonathan Kaufman on *A Hole in the Heart of the World*; Albert French on *Patches of Fire*; Louise De Wijze on *Only My Life*; Gina Alhadeff on *Tales of a Mediterranean Family*. 4/23: Richard Rhodes on *Deadly* *Feasts*; Patrick McGrath on *Asylum*; Susan Baur on *The Intimate Hour*. Weekdays at noon. WNYC, 820 AM/93.9 FM.

The Written Word

Jennifer Egan and Tom Perrotta—4/20 at 7: Reading from *Emerald City* and *The Wishbones*, respectively. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360); free.

Richard Howard and Molly Peacock—4/21 at 7:30: Reading from their poetry. KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (505-3360); free.

David Leavitt—4/17 at 7:30: Reading from *Arkansas*. Barnes & Noble, Broadway at 82nd St. (420-5845); free.

Juanita Brunk—4/20 at 3: Reading from *Brief Landing on the Earth's Surface*. Posman Books, 1 University Place (533-2665); free.

Alice Walker—4/21 at 7: Reading from *Anything We Love Can Be Saved*. International House, 500 Riverside Drive at 122nd St. Call 226-7171 for more information.

Jamaica Kincaid, Michael Pollan, and Linda Yang—4/16 at 6: Reading from *Onward and Upward in the Garden* by Katharine White. Smith & Hawken, 394 West Broadway (925-1190); free.

Paul Hecht and Lynn Vogt—4/16 at 7:30: Reading from the work of Jane Kenyon and Donald Hall. The Community Bookstore, 143 Seventh Ave., Park Slope (718-783-3075); free.

Stephen Dixon and Lois Gould—4/18 at 8: Reading from *Gould* and *No Brakes* respectively. The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (592-4648); free, jacket required.

Selected Shorts: Rites of Passage—4/23 at 7: Readings by Paul Auster. Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway (864-5400); $16.

Joel Rose—4/16 at 6: Reading from *Kill Kill Faster Faster*. The Salon @ Benetton, 597 Fifth Ave. (685-4300, ext. 158); free.

Against the Grain
The New Criterion on Art and Intellect at the End of the Twentieth Century
edited by Hilton Kramer and Roger Kimball
Political Writings from Partisan Review
Kurzweil
One Hundred Years of The Nation
Edited by Henry M. Christman
With an Introduction by Carey McWilliams
Theodore Dreiser
H. L. Mencken
John Dos Passos
Bertolt Brecht
James Agee
Sinclair Lewis
Henry James
Bertrand Russell
Hannah Arendt
The Joys of National Review
1955 to 1980
Compiled by
Priscilla L. Buckley

Happening

Finding a Center

It seems the sole thing left- and right-wing journals share is a sense of cultural siege. "Conservatives feel totally beleaguered by what they see as dominance by the cultural left," says NYU professor Ellen Willis. "And the cultural left feels that conservative thought has become the common sense of the country." This bipartisan paranoia is what led Willis to organize the April 19 conference "Hopelessly Liberal? The Media and the Cultural Conversation." Refreshingly, panel speakers tend toward the sort of bright and reasonable journalists (such as *The Wall Street Journal*'s Joan Acocella) who do not confuse phrases like "bad-boy liberal" with actual arguments—or arts criticism with a congressional inquiry. "We wanted people who would be a little circumspect," agrees moderator Stanley Aronowitz, "not people who'll get up there and defend the last ten years of their lives." (Topics at the daylong conference include "Freedom and the Market," "Popular Culture," and "The Moral Authority of the Critic." Call 998-3786 for information; admission is free.)

Lectures and Panels

"Irish Art in the 20th Century"—4/17 at 7: Bruce Arnold, the literary editor of the *Irish Independent* and author of fourteen books, will speak. *The New Yorker*'s Brendan Gill will introduce. NYU's Glucksman Ireland House, 1 Washington Mews (998-3950); free.

"Drawing From the Source: Miriam, Women's Creativity, and New Ritual"—4/16 at 6:15: A moderated discussion by the artists participating in an exhibition with the same title. At the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, 1 West 4th St. (674-5300); free.

A Celebration of Cartoonist Will Eisner—4/23 at 7 P.M.: *Village Voice* cartoonist Jules Feiffer and *Maus* author Art Spiegelman will chat with cartoonist Will Eisner, who is turning 80. Cooper Union's Great Hall in Foundation Building at 7th St. and Third Ave. (353-4198); $5.

Events

37th Annual New York Antiquarian Book Fair—4/17–4/20 from 4:30 to 9 P.M. on Thursday, noon to 9 P.M. on Friday, 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. on Saturday, and 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. on Sunday: Featuring 174 exhibitors from around the globe. The Park Avenue Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St. (777-5218); $10.

Spring Antiquarian Book Fair—4/16–4/19: Collectors and browsers will find the finest in rare and unusual books, including first editions. Metropolitan Pavilion, 110 W. 19th St. (463-0200); $5.

Tours

The Gramercy Park You Never Knew—4/19 & 20 at 1: A tour through nineteenth-century New York's most exclusive area. For more information call 465-3331; $12.

SoBro: Antique Row and the Mott Haven Historic District—4/20 at 1: A tour of the Bronx's only officially designated historic district, which includes "Irish Fifth Avenue," and Antique Row. Meet at the token booth at 96th St. and Lexington Ave. subway station. (935-3960); $15.

East Village—4/20 at 1: Visit this ethnically and culturally diverse area. Meet at the St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery Church, 10th St. at 2nd Ave. (242-5762); $12.

Benefits

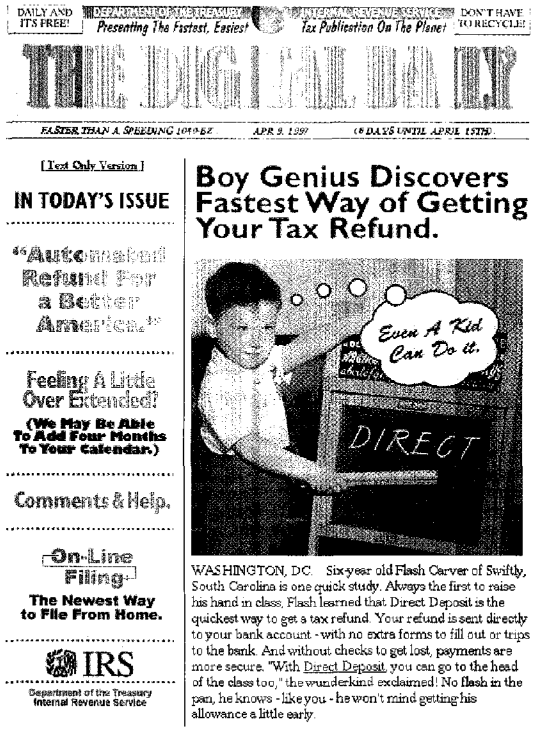
Celebrity Charity Auction—4/16 at 6: This event will benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. 100 couture gowns designed for celebrities will be auctioned. Sotheby's, 1334 York Ave. (606-7263); $65.

The Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services' 105th-Anniversary Gala—5/6 at 6:30: A black-tie dinner and program to benefit the organization's more than 120 programs, which service over 50,000 New Yorkers. At the Pierre Hotel, 2 E. 61st St. (632-4714); $1,800, $1,000, $500.

The New Museum of Contemporary Art's Twentieth-Anniversary Spring Benefit Auction—5/4 at 5:30: A champagne-and-cocktail reception in the museum's gallery, followed by the live auction and dinner dance from 8 P.M. to midnight. Madonna is honorary chair of this event. At the New Museum of Contemporary Art, 583 Broadway (219-1222). Tables are $20,000, $10,000, $5,000, and $4,000; seats are $1,000, $500, and $400.

Exhibitions

The New Baroque: Early Dance Re-creations and Inspirations—Through 5/10: Twentieth-century encounters with Baroque dance and music, prints and illustrations of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dance, and documentation of contemporary works. At the Dance Collection Reading Room of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza (870-1630).



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[Text Only Version]

IN TODAY'S ISSUE

"Automated Refund For a Better America."

Feeling A Little Over Extended?
(We May Be Able To Add Four Months To Your Calendar.)

Comments & Help.

On-Line Filing
The Newest Way to File From Home.

IRS
Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Boy Genius Discovers Fastest Way of Getting Your Tax Refund.

WASHINGTON, DC. Six-year old Flash Carver of Swiftly, South Carolina is one quick study. Always the first to raise his hand in class, Flash learned that Direct Deposit is the quickest way to get a tax refund. Your refund is sent directly to your bank account - with no extra forms to fill out or trips to the bank. And without checks to get lost, payments are more secure. "With Direct Deposit, you can go to the head of the class too," the wunderkind exclaimed! No flash in the pan, he knows - like you - he won't mind getting his allowance a little early.

On the Web
Levying, With Levity

Welcome to the lighter side of the IRS. The most savvy, stylish, and—dare we add—fun of federal-government Web pages, the IRS's 'Digital Daily' (www.irs.ustreas.gov/cover.html), offers scads of useful tips on filing by computer, getting an extension, and arranging direct-to-bank refunds, all in a breezy, colorful format.

Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village—Through 8/10: From the 1820s through the 1850s, a substantial African-American community known as Seneca Village thrived on what is now the west side of Central Park alongside the Great Lawn. This exhibition tells the story of that forgotten community. At the New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park West (873-3400).

"Reproducing the Past: The Colonial Revival Movement"—Through 8/31: Explores the effect this period had on our national consciousness. More than 100 objects on view, including faithful furniture reproductions, photographs, and advertisements from the period. At the Fraunces Tavern Museum, 54 Pearl St. (425-1778).

Sports

Prospect Park Triple Challenge—4/20; 9 A.M.: Registration is at 7 A.M. for the third running of this relay event, which combines inline skating, bicycling and running. (It's a 6.7-mile skate, a 10-mile bike, and a 3.4-mile run). Teams of one, two, or three people can compete. *Prospect Park, Wollman Rink Lot. Call 718-965-6975 for information.*

Earth Day Bike Action—4/22; 6 P.M.: What is a "bike action," exactly? It's a bicycle ride–Earth Day parade for anyone who's interested in celebrating Mother by rolling through the streets of the city with a group of people carrying flowers and plants and signs on their rigs. The event will last about two hours and no more than 30 miles. *Meet at the Fifth Ave. and 59th St. entrance to Central Park. Sponsored by Transportation Alternatives. Call 629-8080 for information.*

Basketball—4/16: Knicks vs. Atlanta Hawks at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 4/16: Nets vs. Philadelphia 76ers at 7:30 P.M., Continental Airlines Arena (Sportschannel); 4/18: Knicks vs. Indiana Pacers at 7:30 P.M., Madison Square Garden (MSG Network); 4/20: Nets vs. Atlanta Hawks at 6 P.M., Continental Airlines Arena (Sportschannel)

Baseball—4/14: Mets vs. S.F. Giants at 7:40 P.M., Shea Stadium (Sportschannel); 4/14–15: Yankees vs. California Angels at 7:35 P.M., Yankee Stadium (MSG Network); 4/15: Mets vs. L.A. Dodgers at 7:40 P.M., Shea Stadium (Sportschannel); 4/16: Mets vs. L.A. Dodgers at 1:40 P.M., Shea Stadium (Channel 9); 4/18: Mets vs. Chicago Cubs at 7:40 P.M., Shea Stadium (Channel 9); 4/19: Mets vs. Chicago Cubs at 1:40 P.M., Shea Stadium (Sportschannel); 4/20–21: Mets vs. Chicago Cubs at 1:40 P.M., Shea Stadium (Channel 9)

Online

Taxes, Schmaxes!—Of all the crackpot arguments that try to subvert the legal, moral, and ethical bases for a federal, progressive income tax, there is actually one historical caveat that almost makes sense: Ohio was not legally a state when it ratified the 16th Amendment (which authorizes the federal income tax), in 1911. Nobody knew this at the time, because a technical flaw in the documents admitting Ohio to the Union (in 1803) was not discovered until 1953. Congress then passed a resolution retroactively conferring statehood on Ohio as of 1803. Which should solve the problem, except that the constitution specifically prohibits Congress from making any *ex post facto* laws. Which, depending on how much a stickler you are for detail, means that the laws authorizing federal income tax, and a whole bunch of other things, may (or may not) be completely invalid. That said, if you plan to chicken out and pay your taxes like the rest of us, here are some online resources you may find helpful (note that all URLs begin with the prefix *www.irs.ustreas.gov/plain*): Instructions on how to file electronically can be found at */elec_svs/ol-txpyr.html;* new changes in this year's tax code are detailed at */ind_info/impchgs.html;* you can submit specific questions about tax law (and receive answers with three business days) at */help/newmail/user.html.*

War Stories—The site maintained by the PBS series *P.O.V.* has become an online gathering place for Vietnam War veterans who were galvanized by an episode of the series last summer that detailed the political and creative struggle to build the Vietnam War Memorial. Since then, the page *Regarding Vietnam: Stories Since the War* has grown organically into a discussion forum in which people who lived through Vietnam connect with each other and share the experiences that have, in some cases, come to define their identities. Even for people who have no personal experience with Southeast Asian quagmires, the posts hold an almost voyeuristic fascination, and make for reading that is both gripping and moving. *www.pbs.org/pov/stories/*

Punch Out Your Favorite Star—If you're using a Shockwave-enabled browser, the Slugfest site (*http://slugfest.kaizen.net/*) allows you to live out a perverse, media-age fantasy: delivering a knuckle sandwich to a particularly annoying celebrity. Download a one-megabyte applications file, then begin using keystrokes to throw left jabs and right hooks at the likes of O. J. Simpson and Ted Kennedy. Other current choices are divided among "Bullies" (Letterman and Madonna, among them), "Meanies" (e.g., Bill Gates and Rush Limbaugh), and "Wusses" (Mr. Rogers, Barney, and Fabio). But the best is yet to come: Howard Stern and Kathie Lee Gifford will be available for smacking soon.

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kids

Eccentric...Sheepish...Twiggy

Children's Events

Avner the Eccentric—In *Exceptions to Gravity,* Avner Eisenberg comes onstage initially as a janitor who's merely going to clean the stage, but of course one thing leads to another. Eisenberg, the accomplished silent clown whose (ventriloquist's) dummy—in the Broadway production of *Ghetto*—was nominated for a Tony, performs in the elegantly oafish tradition of Charlie Chaplin, W. C. Fields, Harpo Marx, and Emmett Kelly. Afternoon and evening performances are Apr. 17 through Apr. 27. **NEW VICTORY THEATER,** 209 W. 42nd St. (564-4222); $10 to $25.

Garden of Earthy Delights—What better way to celebrate Earth Day than molding "mud masterpieces." Just add water Apr. 19 and 20 from 1 to 4. On Sunday, Ron Sopyla tells stories of the earth's origins under a tree from 2:30 to 3:30. **WAVE HILL,** 675 W. 249th St., at Independence Ave. in the Riverdale section of the Bronx (718-549-3200). Admission is $4, $2 for seniors and students, free to children under 6.●

Now You Don't—The Society of American Magicians holds its annual showcase event at **TRIBECA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER.** Meir Yedid, the anointed magician of the year, does a unique digital sleight of hand. Apr. 19 at 8. 199 Chambers St. (718-994-5230); $27.50.●

African Plains of Staten Island—The **STATEN ISLAND ZOO** opens its state-of-the-art "African Savannah at Twilight" exhibit this spring. Opening week (Apr. 19 to 26), the zoo will be alive with activities that celebrate the animals—leopards, baboons, lizards, and antelope—and the culture of the African grasslands as well. For example: Hear stories from the region 4/22 and 4/24 at 2; the Umoja dance-and-music company performs in native dress 4/23 at 7:30 ($7.50 for adults, $5 for children). 614 Broadway, Staten Island. Call 718-442-3100 for directions; $3 for anyone over 12, $2 for younger children.

Japanese Show and Tell—Kids ages 4 to 9 are invited to an afternoon of origami, games, storytelling, and songs at the **JAPAN SOCIETY.** Accomplished practitioners of Kamashibai—a traditional form of street storytelling—will demonstrate the folk art. Apr. 19 from 1 to 2 and from 2:30 to 3:30. 333 E. 47th St. (715-1229); $5 for adults, free to children. Reservations required.●●

"Sheep to Shawl"—Scottish Border collies trained to herd sheep are the stars of an annual rite of spring at Philipsburg Manor. Families can also meet baby lambs, watch sheep shearing (with hand shears), weaving, spinning, and dyeing. Apr. 19 and 20 from 10 to 5. Sheep-herding demonstrations are at 11, 1, and 3. Route 9 in Sleepy Hollow (formerly North Tarrytown), two miles north of the Tappan Zee Bridge; also reachable by boat from New Jersey and Manhattan aboard NY Waterway's "Sleepy Hollow Cruise." Call 800-533-3779 for ferry details. For information about the family festival, call 914-631-8200. During the weekend of the event, call 914-631-3992. Admission is $8, $7 for seniors and students with ID, $4 for children ages 6 to 17.●

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

For the Birds—Bring along binoculars for a free family program in which participants will first take a look at some John James Audubon original watercolors in the New-York Historical Society's collection, then stroll over to Central Park for a look at the same birds in their native habitat. For kids ages 4 to 12. Apr. 19 and May 3 from 11 to 1. 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park West (873-0509). Register.●●

Junior Guggenheim—Take a toddler's-eye look at the Art/Fashion show at the **GUGGENHEIM** in SoHo, and then join in a hat-making bonanza. Apr. 18 from 11 to noon for kids ages 3 to 5. 575 Broadway (423-3587); $6 per child. Register. ●

Tree Hug—"Hug the Forest" is the name of **THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN'S** Earth Day celebration, and you might just want to embrace the spectacular 40 acres left of the pre-Colonial forest that once covered New York City when you see it. Events planned for the day include birding expeditions, an outdoor dance performance, forest bingo, sprucing-up activities, wishes on a leaf, and a big parade. For a schedule and directions, call 718-817-8779. 200th St. and Southern Blvd., Bronx. Admission is $3, $1 for seniors, students, and children ages 6 to 16.●

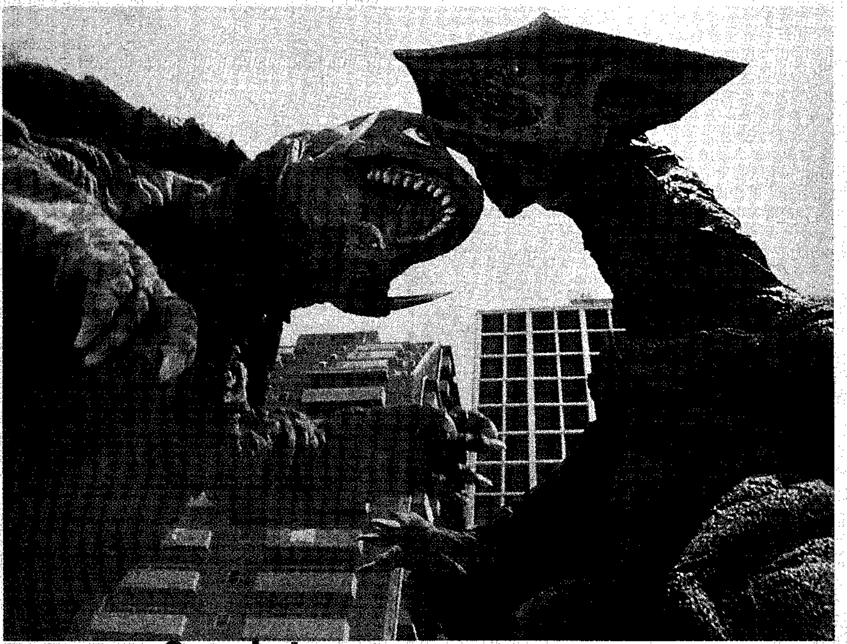
Underage Ailey—A performance by the **ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER** geared to kids 8 and up is at Long Island University's Tilles Center Apr. 19 at 2. Route 25A in Brookville, Long Island. (299-3100); $19.●

Amazing Amadeus—Twelve-year-old Alexander Fondrier plays the young Mozart, and several equally youthful musicians are among the performers in the Little Orchestra Society's concert introducing the extraordinary *oeuvre* of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. For children ages 5 to 12, the concert takes place Apr. 19 at 11 and 1 in Lincoln Center's **AVERY FISHER HALL.** Tickets are $15 to $32. (Following the one o'clock performance, an LOS-benefit lunch with entertainment supports the organization's outreach programs.) (704-2100.)●

Dear Diary—Hudson Talbot and photographer Mark Greenberg, who have collaborated on an extraordinary fictional *as-if* journal, *Amazon Diary* (published by Putnam), share a video diary of their real-life experiences in that part of the world. Several kids ages 10 and 11 read from *their* journals. The program, part of the **DRAWING CENTER'S** "Nightlight for Kids" series, is designed for youngsters in the 7-to-12 age range. 35 Wooster St. (219-2166), Apr. 20 at 3. Free admission, refreshments.●●

Kids Helping Kids—A bunch of kids with bubbling show-business careers pool their talents to help less-fortunate ones in a "Kids With Heart" concert at **TRIBECA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER,** benefitting children with catastrophic diseases, Apr. 18 at 6:30. 199 Chambers St. (595-5757); $35 to $100. ●

Family Album—Make a photo-and-memory album at the **INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY,** Apr. 19 at 2. 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1778); $5 per family. Reserve.●



One-shot Mutant Ninja Turtle

Gamera is one humongous turtle—as a popular Japanese megabeast he ranks second only to Godzilla. And while the armored amphibian makes a real mess of Tokyo in his 1995 release *Gamera: Guardian of the Universe,* it's only because, bless him, he's out to save the city from other oversize creatures and is just a tad clumsy. At Film Forum for two weeks starting April 16. Subtitles.

Photograph courtesy of A.D. Vision.

cue

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Barbara Ensor
Kids

Patricia Falvo
Sports

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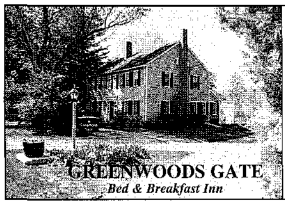

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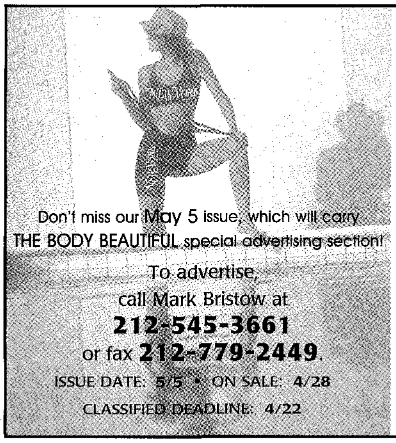

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As featured in NY Times, Crain's NY Business, CNN, CBS, CNBC, ABC, FOX News, BBC, "London" Independent and Cosmopolitan

Are you someone special who isn't meeting that special someone? Don't be discouraged. If you are successful, sincere, emotionally mature and ready for a permanent relationship, please consult with me. In the most confidential, personal way, I will introduce you to the someone special you've been looking for.

The traditional ways of meeting someone are gone. Today, quality people prefer to meet through introductions. My clients are extremely attractive, educated, accomplished people. In the most dignified manner, allow me to introduce you to each other. I make meaningful introductions that can lead to long-lasting relationships.

Denise Winston

By appointment only 212-935-9350

Wanted: The Whole Enchilada—Very attractive, successful, vivacious lady, auburn hair, green eyes, petite, never married, 36 years, publishing CEO. Looking to share a lifetime of love, giggles and adventure with a true gentleman. You are single, 34-42, attractive, successful, educated, communicative, physically and emotionally fit, giving and financially secure. You enjoy life, travel, fine dining, arts, family, friends and dogs (I have two). You are ready to meet your partner, best friend and co-producer of Baby GAP models. Nonsmoker. NYC/Westchester/CT. Letter/photo/phone; will exchange. 6059 ✉

Wanted: Gentle, Attractive Woman—30-45, by male, 49, 6'2", successful, affectionate, sincere - loves nature, theater, travel, conversation. Photo. 6029✉

Smart, Sexy, Spirited—Lovely 46, slim blond seeks smart, playful, funny man... for whatever happens. 5974 ✉ ☎

Hip Downtown Man—Successful, 33, 5'8", smart, good-looking, well-built... Seeks athletic, spunky, charismatic, attractive woman with great body and brains, uptown class and downtown style. Snowboarder, surfer, biker a plus. Ready for serious relationship. Photo, please. 6030 ✉

Very Particular—This youthful, handsome Italian entrepreneur, 41, father of a 6-year-old gorgeous son, seeks his partner. She is a 26-32-year-old, slim, raven-haired, demure, educated, enchanting, breathtaking, unencumbered, trusting companion. It is her inner beauty that makes her physical presence the alluring combination I seek. I've seen your face, felt your touch, heard your laugh and know your values. Tell me more. Recent photo, phone and note a must. 6051✉ ☎

Beautiful, Sweet, Pretty Teacher—Seeks Catholic professional (34-44), easygoing, with sense of humor. 5960 ✉

Beethoven Said—"From heart to heart!" Our hearts, each knowing/loving great opera and classical music, and sadly now not paired, both seek their last great romantic love and life fulfillment. Superbly youthful mid 60s (appearance and physiologically a decade younger!), just-retired Harvard PhD, bio-chem academic scientist, slim 5'8", perfect health, nonsmoker, very nice-looking, financially secure, knows Wall Street - seeks his ideal female counterpart: university-educated, very attractive 50s-plus woman, still slim, appealing and sensual, nonreligious (or not very), with 24-hour loving, cheerful temperament (like mine), for a happiest, committed relationship, enjoying together all that we are. Recent photo exchanged. 6021 ✉

Great Looks, Great Mind, Great Find—Sultry, tall and shapely redhead in her late 40s, knows how to treat a man. Seeks a tall, attractive, successful man with warmth and intelligence, 55-65. 6038 ✉

Tall Professional Male, Entrepreneur—43, Italian descent, advanced degree, athletic, nice-looking, very successful, with true family values and morals, down-to-earth, never married, clean-shaven, romantic. Loves to travel, cook, outdoor activities, NYC culture. Desires professional lady under 40, slim, no children - just ours. I offer love, loyalty, compassion and commitment, and expect the same in return - no games. Photo/home number for reply. 6055 ✉

Definitely Handsome—Great physique and extremely successful entrepreneur, single white male, 30s, tall, never-married, nonsmoking, looking for a slender, well-built, athletic, exceptionally attractive, sensuous and very intelligent, single white female (23-34) with model looks as well as a passionate heart. I am extremely generous and you should enjoy travel, adventure, working out, sports and romance. No dependents please. A recent photo is a requirement, with description and telephone. 6034 ✉

Spring Is In The Air—Athletic, well-built, passionate, upbeat, humorous and romantic, divorced Jewish lawyer, 38, seeking sweet, smart, funny, professional, pretty and fit menschette with an ability to see flowers blooming on a rainy day. Single moms welcome. 6016 ✉ ☎

SEND

A WRITTEN RESPONSE
Here's How:

STRICTLY PERSONALS
New York Magazine, Box # ______
P.O. Box 4600
New York, New York 10163-4600

European, Attractive—Bright, classy, vibrant, warm, accomplished, multilingual lady seeks affectionate, caring, educated, successful, generous man, 55 plus, to enjoy life, possible marriage. 5964 ✉

Handsome, Trim Exec—Secure, warm, kind, with style - seeks educated, slender, classy lady in 50s. Note/photo. 6004 ✉

Renaissance Ivy Surgeon—With good heart, humor; handsome, 5'11", slim, hard body, 43, fun - seeks sincere, bright, sexy lady under 37, for best friend, lover, family. Phone/photo necessary. 6047 ✉ ☎

Pretty Blond PhD—Slim, stunning elegant, seeks 60ish gentleman. 5971 ✉

For The Selective, Class-Act Woman—Please do not respond if this is not you. Sensitive, successful, sophisticated, passionate, good-looking, athletic, 6', 175 lbs, 52, gentleman, one-of-a-kind, new at this. Varied interests but flexible to new ones with the right woman. Seeking soul mate for meaningful relationship and total fulfillment. Recent honest photo, age 40-48 appreciated. Will exchange photos. Home number only. 6039 ✉

Gay, White, 45—Handsome, really nice, smart, preppy. POB 843, NYC 10163

Looking For Love—Good-looking, 5'10", 185 lbs, 39-year-old male, widower, successful businessman, educated, athletic, well-traveled, sensitive, with a sense of humor. Seeks attractive, intelligent, fun-loving, 30-plus female for loving relationship and beyond. Let me make your dreams come true. Please send note/photo. 5992 ✉

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Happy, Lively, Pretty—Slim female, 40s, wants to date relaxed, brave, successful, nice 50-plus male. Note/photo. 5961 ✉

Excite Me—With your intellect, culture, wit and good looks, and this pretty, slender blond, 43, will excite you with hers. 39-50 only. 5975 ✉ ☎

Super Senior Special—Let's move on together into the next millennium! Are you a 60s gentleman? Interests: travel, bridge, golf, tennis. Please be fit, I'm a nifty sixty lady. 6061 ✉

Attorney, 38, Jewish—Fun, very good-looking, romantic, seeks slim, sweet, petite female, to 34, for laughter, love, forever. Note/photo will exchange. 5953 ✉

The Doctor Is In—Manhattan MD, 30, musician/singer, name the sport - love outdoors, books, cafes, museums. Seek educated, slim, pretty female with a sense of humor and of self. Photo please. 6063✉

Down-To-Earth NYC Professional—White-Hispanic, pretty, thin lady, 28, 5'3", seeks kind, honest man, interested in the arts, and looking for a good, sincere, caring relationship. Note/photo a plus. 5956 ✉

Attractive, Blond, Blue-Eyed Female—Professional, with good sense of humor, intelligence and kind heart, would like to meet a professional man, 30s-40s, who is "healthy, wealthy and wise". 5999 ✉

Pretty, Poised Professional—Jogger, scuba diver, lover of art, opera, theater, travel. Seeks secure, compassionate man, 50s, with sense of humor, willing to share the sedate to unconventional, for committed relationship. 6053 ✉ ☎

Cultured, Wealthy Gentleman—64, seeks lady, 40 plus, for friendship or more. Please write to: POB 1100, Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510.

Slender Beauty—Physician, 5'10", 33, leggy former gymnast, with charm, class - who is sexy, warm, bright, enjoys art and travel. I seek tall, secure, sincere man, 30-45, for fun times, romance and a future together. 5989 ✉ ☎

All I'm Missing—Is a picture of you on my desk. Attractive, sincere, sweet, NJ, professional Jewish female, 32, seeks handsome, professional Jewish male for a lifetime of love and devotion. 6022 ✉ ☎

"10"—Ivy beauty, funny, sexy, smart, talented, special, seeks match in 50s. 6036 ✉

Cynical Girl Seeks Soldier Of Love—Slim, pretty blond professional, 33, seeks guy, 25-45, who enjoys film, pop music, food and wine. Photo and note. 5966 ✉

Handsome, Successful PhD—Clinical psychologist in 40s - interests include the arts, working out, film - looking for right woman for friendship, romance and hopefully future. Photo/phone. 6009✉☎

Attractive Jewish Man—68, Fort Lee, enjoys everything. Seeking companion? Commitment? Who knows? To share same. Photo appreciated. 5965 ✉

Nice Guys...—Finish first! Pretty, blue-eyed brunette, 5'5", in shape, personable Jewish professional, 38, seeks kind, successful Jewish male. NJ a plus. 5982 ✉

Humorous And Handsome—Professional male, 32, 5'9", athletic and romantic, seeks attractive, intelligent female, 27-37, with great sense of humor, for friendship and ? Note/photo. 5957 ✉

First Mate Wanted—49-year-old, handsome, professional, divorced Jewish male seeks soul mate, lover and best friend - a woman who cares more about "us" and "we" than "I" and "me"...loves to sail, is very attractive, caring, bright and accomplished, 37-49 and 5'7" or under. Let's sail into the sunset. Photo a must. 5951✉

Beautiful Blond From East Europe—36, 5'6", 120 lbs, professional, easygoing, comfortable in jeans and ballroom dress, one small child. Seeks professional, stable, kind man, 33-50, who is ready to make a commitment. 5986 ✉

Do You Feel Lonely?—Retired Manhattanite lady, 65, French culture, intelligent, financially secure, attractive, petite - seeks gentleman, Caucasian, similar age/quality, to erase loneliness. I smoke. Note/photo/please. 5987 ✉

Witty, Down-To-Earth—30, 5'11", Jewish male, financial professional, in shape, good sense of humor, seeks 20-26, pretty, slim, affectionate woman with sense of humor. You are adventurous, like the out-of-doors and travel, but also like to hang out and do nothing. 6044 ✉ ☎

Passover's Here—Your parents ask, *"Nu? Anyone special?" You can tell them* about me... Tall, pretty, 35, nonsmoker, funny, smart, upbeat and a great kosher cook too. 5976 ✉

The Timing Is Now Right!—Aspiring to share unique chemistry with a Jewish woman of strong character who is not only educated and intellectually stimulating but also refined, possessed of great looks, warm, with a happy outlook on life. Let's not forget spiritual, sensual and a refreshing sense of humor. I am a certifiably handsome man, 5'9", 45, successful Manhattan physician, generous and romantic, with European charm and solid contemporary values. A beautiful relationship and a family are what I want. The less likely you are to answer an ad, the more promising a pair we might be. 6043 ✉

Slim, Pretty Writer—Looks ten years younger than 43, cultured, intellectual, unpretentious, warmhearted - seeks best friend/soulmate/helpmate. Must be emotionally/financially secure. Please take a moment to tell me about yourself. Photo a plus. 6003 ✉

Guy With Bicycle—Affable, emotionally available, left-leaning, slightly geeky, 37, seeks very smart, thinking woman, 26-39, into outdoor and cultural activities, for collaborative relationship. Kids okay. POB 2079, NYC 10025

Don't Pass Over This Ad—Special woman wanted - is that you? This tall, athletic Jewish attorney seeks a woman, 30-36, to share all that life has to offer. Photo/phone a must for reply. 5977 ✉

Japanese, Long-Haired, Happy—Dancer turned entrepreneur, never married, 5'5", 48 (looks 29!!), seeks other half - handsome (model looks) CEO/JD, 29-49, Manhattan PH lifestyle. Lunch at 21 - dinner, I'll cook for you! 6046 ✉

Beautiful Brunette—42, slim, Jewish, 5'7", woman of heart and mind - seeks kindred spirit with heart of gold. 6006 ✉

Two (516) Purrsian Cats—Seek wonderful, professional, handsome Jewish (30-40) man for their truly beautiful, tall, striking, slim (33) owner to have and to hold. Photo/note. 6014 ✉ ☎

Who says meeting Mr/Ms Right is easy? I do!!!

Somewhere out there is that *special* someone waiting to meet you. This individual is not someone you will meet in a bar, at a singles party or through the personal ads. The clients I represent are very prestigious, attractive, successful, healthy in mind, body and spirit. If the people you have been meeting are not of the caliber you desire...then call me for an appointment. Afford me the opportunity to make the ***right*** introduction for you.

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Single Jewish Female—37, *never married,* seeks caring, secure, single Jewish male, 34-44 (nonsmoker), who wants marriage, kids, involvement in synagogue, and enjoys celebrating the Jewish holidays. Looking for man with strong values, who is a good person, outgoing and full of life. Some of my interests include tennis, volleyball, hiking, street festivals, arts-and-crafts shows, barbecues, dancing, theater and billiards. Note/phone/photo. 6032 ✉

Captivating Smile!—Classy, slim, very pretty Euro-American, mid 30s, multilingual, smart, spiritual and adventurous, seeks an exceptional, intelligent professional man with a social conscience and generous heart, 35-45, creative, fit, funny, who wants a soul mate, for life and family. Note/photo preferred. 6012 ✉ ☎

The Real Thing!—Dark-eyed, long-legged, 5'7", 35, Jewish babe (did I say that?), very attractive, thin and fit, classic, hip, creative. Seeks to share arts, travel, romance and life with an accomplished and confident man, fit body and mind, sharp wit and warm heart. Ready for it? Note/photo. 6050 ✉

Handsome, Bright, Affectionate—43, 5'9", full-time Columbia grad student, financially secure. Easygoing, optimistic, focused, fit. Loves to laugh, swim, hike, read, explore, walk in the park. Enjoys animals, music, theater, the ocean, art. Jewish (nonreligious). Seeks cuddly, attractive, intelligent woman, 30s (nonsmoker), fit, with warm smile and kind heart. 5959 ✉

Sparks Will Fly—When this handsome, affluent, debonair, green-eyed, romantic, single white male, 56, trim, athletic, 5'10", worldly fashion CEO with Hamptons home, into tennis, dining, travel and photography, finally discovers his "Cinderella" - an exceptionally beautiful, model-shape, upbeat, single white female, to 42 (no baggage - foreign okay). I'm eager to share my upscale lifestyle with a devoted woman I can respect, love, cherish. Note/phone. Recent photo. 5941 ✉ ☎

Jane Seeks Tarzan With Brains—Me: white Jewish female, 34, pretty, funny, long hair, slim - skis and bikes. You: white male under 45, over 5'8", cute, fit, fun and honest. Photo? 5973 ✉ ☎

SPECIAL OFFER

in Strictly Personals

Taxes, the gym, new spring wardrobe... It's all happening now. Don't let a few extra expenses stop you from placing your personal ad in *New York Magazine*. Just take advantage of our Spring Fling special discount! Place your ad now** in *New York Magazine* and get a special 10% discount. Ask for our phone option in addition to getting letters, and you'll get an extra 5% discount – for a total savings of 15%. So don't let love pass you by, especially at these savings. Place your personal ad in the most fabulous environment for professional singles, *New York Magazine's* Strictly Personals!

Call us at: 212-779-7500 or fax your ad to: 212-779-2449

** Includes issues dated: 4/28, 5/5, 5/12, 5/19.

IT HAPPENED THROUGH NEW YORK MAGAZINE STRICTLY PERSONALS

I never thought I'd place or answer a personal ad, but I'm sure glad I did! As background, I had worked as a stockbroker in Manhattan since 1985. The demise of my firm in 1990 gave me an opportunity to pursue a dream - to work out of my house as a financial consultant. By 1992, business had grown to the point where survival was assured and my material needs were being met. But my business left me with the dilemma of having little contact with the non-telephone world... Since success in business had come from being assertive, that would become my strategy in my personal life as well. So I submitted an ad to New York Magazine.

I received about 35 responses and responded to five of the ads. Dinner meetings were made at the restaurant of each woman's choice. In two weeks time,I had traveled from the Frog & The Peach restaurant in NJ to Restaurant Daniel in NYC...mostly fine times, but nothing that felt like a "love connection" (eeh gads, I can't believe I wrote that). What I was surprised about was the quality of woman who responded to personal ads. One was a TV producer, another a dancer working in an off-Broadway production. The fourth date was a pediatrician three years my junior...I was pleasantly surprised by the candor of her voice response. I was also surprised that, when given the choice of dining anywhere in Manhattan, she chose an informal Sunday brunch spot on the West Side.

On the Sunday after Thanksgiving, 1995, I was running late for the 2:00 brunch and didn't get to the restaurant until 2:20. I frantically looked for a parking spot, and was unsuccessful for 25 minutes. At 2:45, I raced inside and said to a woman waiting at a table, "Are you waiting for the guy from NJ?" With a look that confirmed I had gotten off on a bad foot, she said yes. We talked a lot about nothing, and I felt we were not connecting. It was a sunny day, so I asked her if she wanted to walk off brunch - and to my surprise she said yes! On the way to the park, I asked if we could stop by my car and get my coat. She loved my Lexus and my beat-up leather coat. At least I was making a little impression! After walking through the park, I could tell she and I were warming to each other. I began to notice that she had gorgeous eyes and a self deprecating manner that was refreshing. It was then that I told her I was previously married and had one child. After thirty minutes we were holding hands, and after another hour we kissed at a monument near 79th Street on the West Side. We then decided to take in dinner, and as fate's dice continued to roll me 7's, I had her favorite singer, Anita Baker, on my CD player.

From the first date, that lasted six hours, through a helicopter ride over the Statue of Liberty, where I proposed to her, the two of us had an experience through the New York Magazine personals that will last us a lifetime. Since such a service can be like a mutual friend to the lovelorn, maybe I wasn't lying when I told friends and family how we met!

Sincerely,
Just Married

Upbeat, Tall, Attractive Jewish Widow—Seeks special man, 50 plus. 6011 ✉

Wall Street Wizardess—Seeks Jewish wizard who is tall, nonsmoking and between 36-45. I hope that you are set in your career, like your family and know how to laugh. I'm tall, charming and pretty (a former beauty pageant finalist). I have a great sense of style, and most think a great wit. Let's cast a spell! Note/recent photo, please. 6048 ✉ ☎

Retired Professional—Physically and emotionally like 40, widowed, versatile and athletic, numerous and varied intellectual and cultural interests. Seeks very attractive lady in 40s (though not necessarily chronologically), interesting and cultured. I am the "there's nobody out there..." guy. Note/phone/photo. 5980 ✉

Country Girl—Single female, very pretty, 43, golden brown hair, 5'6", fair, seeks sincere, athletic, attractive male for companionship. Enjoy long walks on beach, movies, concerts. Photo/phone. 6041 ✉☎

Warm, Very Attractive, Successful—39-year-old Christian woman who enjoys golf, travel, movies, fun and romance - seeks loving, compassionate, generous, secure (both emotionally and financially) man with a great sense of humor about love and life - nonsmoker. Please send note and photo. 6002 ✉

Wanted: Best Friend With Benefits—I'm an outgoing, fun, family-oriented 33-year-old (hell of a catch), with a lot to offer. Nonanorexic-looking Jewish female, living in central NJ. I have a lot of plans for the spring and summer...and the rest of my life. I realized I was missing that special guy to share the good times with. You should be 31-40, just a bit romantic, a down-to-earth person who wants the same things out of life. Nonsmoker, please. Note/photo/phone. 5947 ✉ ☎

Well, How Did I Get Here?—Beautiful, soulful, smart, fit, sexy, youthful 35-year-old woman, 5'8", with huge heart, in search of funny, handsome, grounded, educated, kinetic man who will make me laugh. I'm blond, earthy, exceptional. You're tall, warm, serious about home and kids. Note/photo/phone. 6035 ✉

Best Friend Wanted—By a good-looking, fit, 5'10", 175 lb, 36-year-old Jewish guy. I love to laugh, share conversations, explore new things, work out and cuddle with my best friend. Are you a 28-37-year-old lady who is attractive, warm, sensitive, athletic, witty and fun to be with? Photo/note, please. 5949 ✉ ☎

Manhattanophile—45, 5'10", 180. Likes restaurants, movies, fashion, architecture, dry wit. Seeks extremely pretty lady, health oriented, career oriented. Character as important as looks. Under 40 a plus. Note/photo/phone. 6013 ✉

African-American Female—53, slim, educated, caring, seeks gentleman, 47-59, for friendship/companionship. 6015 ✉

Single Dad Seeks Single Mom—I'm 6', active, athletic, Ivy, financially secure, looking for female counterpart in 30s. No smokers. Photo a must. 6040 ✉

Class, Brains, Joie De Vivre—Beauty in and out, enough money, 50. Sound like you? Sounds like me. Divorced lady looking for a good man. 6018 ✉

Westchester Blithe Spirit—Petite, 50s, fit, divorced educator - enjoys outdoors, culture, animated conversation. Seeking 50-plus, intelligent, emotionally healthy man. Photo/letter/phone. 6028 ✉ ☎

The Jewish Patient—Patiently waiting for your photo if you like old musicians with young hearts. I'm 51, dance, sing and do dishes. POB 610, Brooklyn, NY 11209

40s Seeks 30s—Sensitive, romantic, funny, good-looking, athletic, self-employed, divorced white male - seeks pretty, feminine counterpart for fun, romance, love, marriage. Note/photo. 5984 ✉

Tall, Dark, Handsome—Healthy, wealthy, wise, Jewish, 33 - for true lady. 5963 ✉

Sexy, Smart, Shapely, Petite—Jewish businesswoman, 57, seeks youthful, educated, classy gentleman. 5981 ✉ ☎

Athletic Architect Wanted—Have fun designing a blueprint for activity and romance with this slim, striking, 5'9", athletic, blond-haired, blue-eyed, 41-year-old professional woman of intellect, energy and compassion. A Jeffersonian spirit is a plus! Photo and bio completes this plan of action. 6033 ✉

Asian Beauty, MD—Seeks 30s, fat/drug/disease-free man. Photo. 5997 ✉ ☎

Cute Renaissance Woman—36, seeking an attractive, 30-40 man who is romantic, communicative, spiritual and unpretentious and ready to build a loving life partnership and family. Also enjoys traveling, museums and outdoors. Photo. 6008 ✉

Pretty, Slim And Bright—Financial entrepreneur, 49 - loves the arts, animals and exploration. Seeks mensch with varied interests, for joint ventures. 6031 ✉ ☎

Retired Playboy—53, tall, trim, active in gym - good-looking, easygoing, casual, relaxed, established and successful, Christian. Enjoy NYC, restaurants, movies, theater; weekend home, boating, warm-climate travel. Looking for playgirl, 38-48, friends first. Photo would be nice. 5967 ✉

Fashion Exec Plus ??—Equals admired couple! Requirements: best friend, loyal, honest, "9" looks, 38-48. Remuneration: fun, excitement, security, affection, passion. Qualities: intelligent, funny, attentive, sincere and compassionate. Photo a must - in God we trust. 6037 ✉☎

Wanted: Wasp, Well-Bred—50ish woman. CPW-Westchester. 6045 ✉

Finest, Beautiful Hispanic Female—High IQ, nice, kind, 39, seeks NYC's best male. 5706 ✉

Sophisticated Lady—Elegant blond financial professional - cultured, seeks well-educated, fun-loving man, 50s. 6010✉☎

Lyrical, Cultured, Playful Woman—In excellent physical and intellectual shape, seeks to love and laugh with serious man, 40s-50s. I'm 5'4", slim, shapely and considered very attractive. I'm childless but your children welcome. 6049 ✉ ☎

Romance—Do you want it? Well get a pen and a photo, and reply to this 5'11", 175 lbs, green-eyed, 35-year-old Jewish male who loves to shop, play tennis, travel and hang by the pool. If you are looking for only a fun time, do not put a stamp on the envelope. Only real women need reply. (914)/(203) preferred. 5978 ✉

SEND

A WRITTEN RESPONSE
Here's How:

STRICTLY PERSONALS
New York Magazine, Box # ______
P.O. Box 4600
New York, New York 10163-4600

LI Doctor Makes House Calls—Good-looking, domesticated, adventurous doctor, 40 plus, nonsmoker, seeks lady, 35 plus, with beauty/character, for permanency and fun. Let's both enjoy my Hamptons waterfront house. Photo/note/phone required. 5970 ✉

Gay Guy—I can't say I'm handsome, rich or have abs of steel. However, I'm honest, sincere and an overall nice guy. I'm 33 years old, 6'2", 180 lbs and generally fit. I enjoy life and am looking to meet a quality individual. 5969 ✉

Looking For Workout Partner For Life—Athletic, artsy and ultra-fit, single white Manhattan male, exec, 42, looking to spoil a great woman rotten. Please be 20s-30s, white or Asian, 5'3" and under, with love of fitness, the arts, family and romance in the Big City. 6054 ✉ ☎

Bohemian Yet Cultured—Sporty yet sophisticated. Blond, blue-eyed female, with years of ballet, Ivy MBA, late 30s, back in the US. Seeking guy with a sense of humor and brains. 6000 ✉

Mountain Man Wanted—Gorgeous Catholic woman, 5'8", 118 lbs - runway model/Wall street exec, all-in-one - seeks handsome professional man, 32-42, for skiing, adventures and life's challenges. Note/photo. 5954 ✉

I Have The Good Life—And am looking for that special woman. Me: 60ish, semi-retired, 5'7", well-educated, thin, very athletic, handsome, fun, successful, arts lover, movies and travel. You: very attractive, 50-55, with similar attributes and interests, who wants love and romance with one terrific guy. Note/recent photo/phone. 5998 ✉

Personable Widower—Retiree, blue eyes, trim, chivalrous, seeks woman, 60 plus, for lunch, dinner, dates. Warmth of character more important than age or ailments. May I have this dance? 6024 ✉

Meet Me At Solsbury Hills—Attractive and slender (honestly), adventurous, warm, witty, Jewish professional female, 5'6", 30, seeks an all-around nice guy - intelligent, handsome, fit and fun. Note/photo. Just have to trust imagination... 6062 ✉

Relationship—You and I? Attractive male, 61 (looks 50), 6', slim, loves to sail. Desires lovely, interesting, tall, long-legged woman, 47-57, for now and tomorrow. Photo. 5968 ✉

Weekends In The Country—Sound good for spring and summer? Tall (5'10"), terrific female journalist, 39, seeks amorous, kind, funny man for good conversation, walks in the woods at my upstate house, and city fun during the week. Smoker okay, but no "commitmentphobics" please. 5979 ✉ ☎

Successful Businessman—White, 45, not a time-waster - enjoys sunsets, travel, *movies, romantic settings, dancing,* theater. Seeks honest, caring, slender woman, 31-39, not a game player, for marriage. Photo/phone. 5996 ✉

I Enhance The Man I'm With—Lady with beauty, brains and breeding. NYC and Boca, FL homes. Seeks quality, refined Jewish gentleman, 55-65, financially secure, for relationship. 5950 ✉ ☎

"10" Inside And Out—Very pretty, 52, Jewish, successful professional female, 5'8", slim, good heart, playful, cuddly, down-to-earth, seeks long-term love relationship with male counterpart who especially values the people in his life. 5993 ✉ ☎

Engaging Artist/Professor—45, 5'5", feminine, shapely, fit - loves travel, nature, *animals.* Seeks *unconventional,* health-conscious, cultured man with wit. 6007 ✉ ☎

Tall, Urban, Auburn Woman—Enjoys traveling, entertaining. Seeking a 35-45 man who is humorous, spiritual, open. I'm busy in the film industry, but I have time for you. Join me? Note/photo. 5958 ✉

The Heart's Forever Young—I'm an *attractive, petite, playful redheaded* professional, 60-something lady from NJ, full of joie de vivre - looking for a gentleman, 63-73, who is young in spirit and looks, busy with his own great life, and looking for a loving friend to share good times with. 5837 ✉

Nice Jewish Guy—Honest, caring, romantic, athletic, intelligent, nice-looking, *financially secure, family-*oriented. Likes tennis, music, romantic dinners, good conversation, fun vacations. Seeking wonderful Jewish woman with similar likes and qualities, to share an already good life. Late 40s-50s. Recent photo, please. 6027 ✉

Got Lost On Career Track—Find this fit, 45, accomplished, independent female *without someone to bounce ideas off of...* to chart new routes in life or to be her soul mate. She is interesting and interested. Terrific if you are 46-55, educated professional, nonsmoker, eclectic interests, physically/emotionally/financially fit, and have a sense of sophistication balanced by an incurable sense of curiosity/adventure. Photo and handwritten note. 6026 ✉ ☎

Help Us—*Give our friend a 35th birth*day present to last a lifetime. Attractive, single white female seeking handsome, single white male for travel, outdoors, romance and much more. 6058 ✉

Life Is Short—Gorgeous redhead, warm, fit, successful Manhattanite, optimist/realist, 36, seeks sincere, attractive, grounded, financially secure man, 36-45, *for laughter and love.* 6005 ✉ ☎

Latina Beauty Sought—By successful Jewish professional, handsome, 39, 6'2", sweet, kind, caring, affectionate, loyal, with a heart of gold. 5972 ✉ ☎

Complete Honesty—A heart of gold and a sense of humor are the most important things to me. I'm 34, Jewish male, 6'2", *nice-looking, fit, looking for intelligent,* attractive, educated Jewish female. NYC/NJ. Note/photo. 6057 ✉

Think Spring In CT—Attractive, warm professional woman, 38, 5'8", with a great smile - lives in CT but loves NYC, biking, tennis, golf, long talks and long walks on the beach. Seeks a smart, caring, athletic man who enjoys life and wants *to share it with someone special.* Note/photo. 6025 ✉

European-Born—39, slim, 5'5", attractive Jewish female MD would like to meet frank, kind, intelligent man, 35-45, for relationship. Photo a must. 6019 ✉

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Creative, Classy, Caring—Very attractive, 32, 5'5", good figure, great hair, green eyes and gracious smile, open-minded, with diverse interests. Seeking male, 30-40, for friendship, laughter and romance, who is confident, handsome, passionate, honest and warm. Have a good sense of humor, and be balanced in body, mind and soul. Note/photo, please. 5983✉

One Of New York's Bravest—Fireman, 30, 6', 220 lbs, muscular build. I read, work out, go to movies, enjoy sports. Man of action and thought. Looking for thoughtful woman - pretty, similar age. Race unimportant, religion unimportant. Seeking one who knows it's all in the mind. Photo appreciated. 5955 ✉

Handsome Psychologist—Sincere, down-to-earth - looking for bright, attractive woman, 30-45. Photo. 6001 ✉

Attractive, Accomplished Artist—With brains, heart, humor, seeks successful, loving man, mid 40s-late 50s, to share culture, nature, each other. 5985 ✉ ☎

Pretty Female—Seeks single male for adventure and possibly the future. Please be sincere, 37-49, enjoy golf and surprises. Note/photo. 5990 ✉

Handsome, Active And Sensitive—5'7" male, who enjoys sailing, Harley-riding, golf, fine dining, travel and basic life enjoyment, is seeking a slim, petite, NY-based Jewish lady, 38-44, with similar interests, to share a great summer and beyond. Photo a must. 6020 ✉ ☎

Good-Looking, Ivy—6', Brooks Brothers, business, Wall Street, art interests, 48, Jewish. Seeking cultured, sweet, pretty, trim professional, 30s-40s. Note/photo/phone. 5962 ✉

Professional White Male—Collge grad, slim, 5'10", 61. Enjoys the arts, theater, fine dining. Seeks trim, pretty, professional woman, 45-55, counterpart. Note/photo (recent)/phone. 6060 ✉

Best Friend And Lover—Funny, successful entrepreneur, athletic, sophisticated, boyish, 6'2", 44, seeks slim, funny beauty, 28-40. Photo/note. 6056 ✉

Gay Woman—*Successful, attractive, fem*inine and 50. Enjoys the arts, fine dining, tennis and life. Looking for an attractive woman, 45-60, who is accomplished, cultured, fit, with a sense of humor and style, for a meaningful relationship. Nonsmoker. Recent photo/note. 5991 ✉

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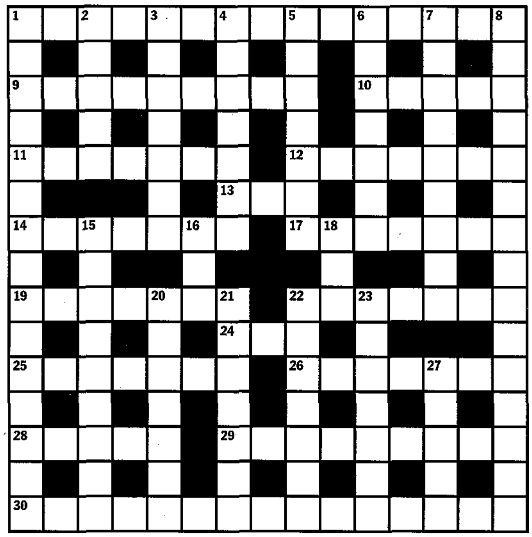
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 Drunk on brewer's liquor, politician enters excellent defence. (10,5)
9 Lost reptile brought back by no fellow on Lammas Day. (9)
10 Twenty pesetas will include all sorts. (5)
11 Symbolic reflection one found in bed. (7)
12 Class remains undisciplined. (7)
13 Bird feared by Euro-sceptics? (3)
14 Publicity avoids involving Diana's initial . . . (7)
17 . . . failure to answer charge of strong emotional involvement. (7)
19 Love? Give us a ring about it—we've no feelings. (7)
22 One who may expect some refusal to start granting easy entry. (7)
24 Was she taken from Adam? (3)
25 With 17, turning us into byways . . . (7)
26 . . . and not therein, for a change. (7)
28 They say it's light to lift. (5)
29 Quango to consider military equipment? (5,4)
30 Priest wagged finger at alternative entertainer. (15)



DOWN

1 When it's fixed the time is at hand. (5,5,5)
2 Insult to west country town's not on. (5
3 First mount overtaken by similar one near Lewes. (7)
4 Signs of power? (7)
5 Turpin's push-over also included accompanying words. (5,2)
6 Diana merits a break. (7)
7 Threatening child with finality. (9)
8 He hopes to have business for life. (9,6)
15 English advanced in vain before mating call. (9)
16 A letter from 2 . . . (3)
18 . . . but first a drink. (3)
20 To work fast is beneath the fashionable rich. (7)
21 Greeted with a bit of luck instead for a change. (7)
22 Called family in to establish pecking order. (7)
23 Unofficial strike after leading fireman holds the sheet. (7)
27 Organ featured in 15. (5)

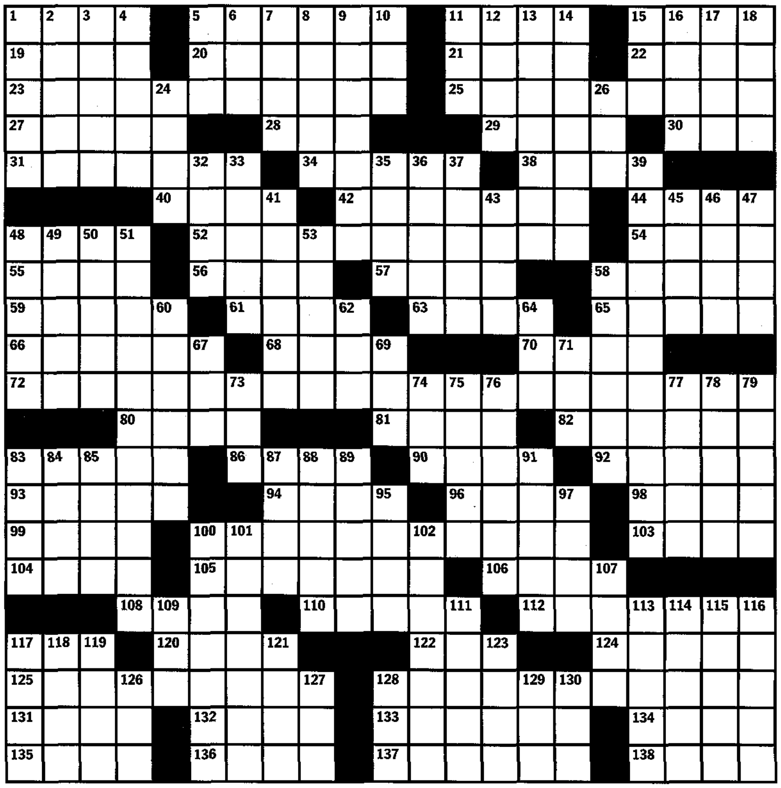
'Life Story': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

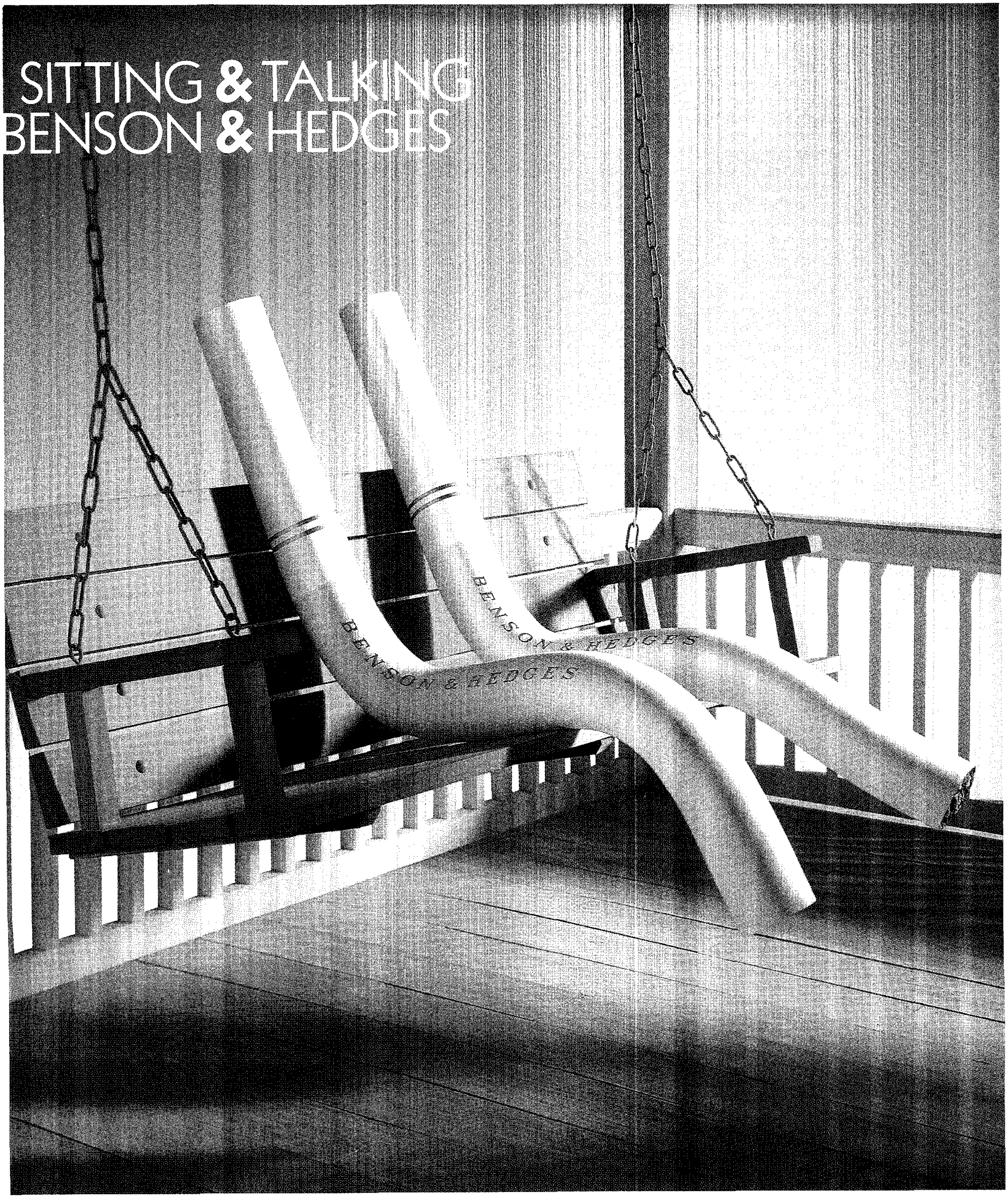
1 Backyard building
5 Cosa ——
11 Scraggly curl
15 Phase in moth development
19 Alley Oop's love
20 Noah's landfall
21 Say it is so
22 Topmost point
23 ORIGINAL NAME
25 FIRST HUSBAND
27 Autumn flower
28 Electrician's abbr.
29 Verne's submariner
30 Signal to the auctioneer
31 Playground sights
34 Give the syntax
38 Phoned
40 Wardrobe accessory
42 Machine-gun sound
44 Dobbin's dinner
48 Start of a magician's chant
52 MOST FAMOUS ROLE
54 Fail to include
55 Doggone it!
56 Mast
57 Husky's haul
58 Slyly disparaging
59 Cousins' moms
61 Cheese burg
63 Whilom
65 Liability's opposite
66 Wall indentations
68 Neighbor of Windsor
70 "—— Love Her," Beatles song
72 BIOGRAPHY, with "The"
80 New York's Central, for one
81 Boxer Spinks
82 Bequest
83 Cut-rate
86 Diminutive suffix
90 Poker prerequisite
92 Twine source
93 Card-game authority
94 Samovars
96 Takeout store
98 River the Aswan dams
99 Kind of code
100 1939 FILM
103 Shifter's concern
104 Jeanne ——
105 Obliteration
106 Peddle
108 Jacob's twin
110 Osmoses
112 They go buy the book
117 Fi's go-with
120 Frozen-waffle brand
122 Mideast word for hill
124 "Ready or not, —— come!"
125 CHILD
128 IT'S HER LIFE
131 —— vera
132 Wiesel or Abel
133 Short of hemoglobin
134 Kin of etc.
135 Polite bloke
136 Feed to the full
137 Didn't exist
138 Lott's predecessor

DOWN

1 Settees
2 Half a centaur
3 Happify
4 Jutlanders
5 Scottish turndown
6 Eithers' correlatives
7 The Forsyte tale, e.g.
8 Chosen suit, at bridge
9 Fortification
10 Bank convenience, for short
11 Chewing-tobacco chunk
12 Name of six czars
13 More than a couple
14 Ape-family member
15 Golf norm
16 "It came —— the midnight clear . . ."
17 Morelia money
18 Hewed
24 Zodiac crustacean
26 Johnson of "Miami Vice"
32 Sees the preacher
33 Skier's topography
35 Fans' yells
36 Vogue
37 Raring to go
39 LAST FILM: "I Could ——"
41 Was active on Wall Street
43 Future frogs, familiarly
45 "Lucky Jim" author
46 Ocean motion
47 Editor's "leave it in"
48 Hersey's bell town
49 Spread the news about
50 Home on the range
51 1965 BROADWAY APPEARANCE
53 Take the stump
58 Hawkins and Thompson
60 Pancho's poncho
62 Cow's comment
64 Bituminous liquid
67 Obsolete Russian abbr.
69 Grid org.
71 Ending for mater or pater
73 Tina Turner's ex
74 Shipment from China
75 Toyota rival
76 Joins a competition
77 Titled jazzman
78 Florida city
79 "Ben Hur" director
83 African republic
84 Romanian circle dance
85 Ogler
87 Big brass-wind instrument
88 Lock of hair
89 Come afterward
91 Playwright Rice
95 Successful stud
97 Bit of land
100 Snoopy, and ilk
101 Salad veggie
102 Eighth planet from the sun
107 CO-STAR
109 Where the buoys are
111 Passover feast
113 Blue-penciled
114 Poet's Muse
115 Pertaining to the kidneys
116 Move edgewise
117 Smelting debris
118 Old king of rhyme
119 Pressing need
121 The long and the short ——
123 Disease from ticks
126 Take-home pay
127 To a —— (precisely)
128 Mandible
129 Most of a martini
130 Play segment



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 95.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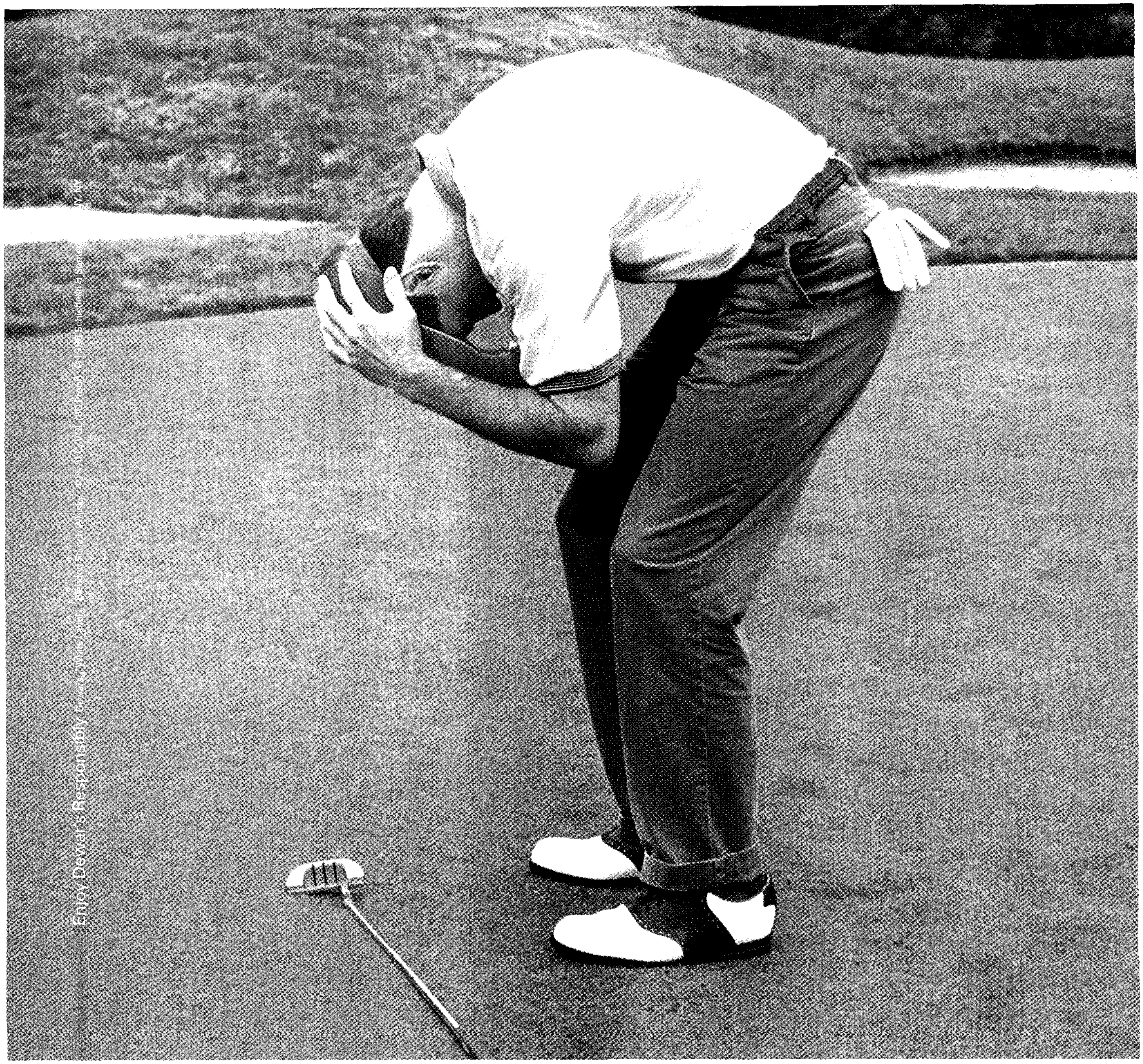

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